The Nation.

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DiMAGGIO'S STREAK STRICKEN?

Say It Ain't So, Joe

GENE CASE

You could look it up. (Page 225)

Is Mencken P.C.?

GORE VIDAL

Often right but seldom correct. (Page 228)

AUG 16

EDITORIAL

PEE-WEE'S BAD TRIP

As TV's first postmodern kiddie icon, Pee-Wee Herman carried a lot of cultural luggage. His Saturday morning hit show was a campy commentary on gender, authority and the television industry itself. Full of sexual innuendo, double-entendre and auto-referential visual puns (Pee-Wee once "went camping" on the set, complete with flaming campfire), *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* played house in the wreckage of American innocence.

Now Pee-Wee's human animator, Paul Reubens, has been permanently deconstructed by the very forces he targeted. The industry that makes big bucks exposing sexual fantasies to millions and selling mutilation toys to tots has declared Pee-Wee a nonperson for getting caught in a position of self-abuse inside a darkened "adult" movie theater.

CBS pulled *Pee-Wee's Playhouse* reruns off the air, toy stores pulled Pee-Wee items off the shelf, iconographers pulled Pee-Wee's hand prints and his gold star from the sidewalk on Hollywood Boulevard and parents are said to be "counseling" their children to withstand the revelation that their idol has feet, or whatever, of clay. It brings to mind the moralistic eruption that ended the career of Fatty Arbuckle (so named in an earlier, unenlightened day; now he'd be Weight-Challenged Arbuckle), though the silent-screen comedian was found innocent of the death of a starlet at an orgy. The moral? Orgies can go awry, and don't go camping in the wrong playhouse. And don't think you can survive as a rebel, however hilarious, in TV's well-fortified cultural garrison.

FIERS ALARM
DOUGLAS McGRATH

NUKE COMEBACK IN EAST EUROPE
R. DENNIS HAYES

HERSTORIES
LILLIAN S. ROBINSON

AD REINHARDT
ARTHUR C. DANTO

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LETTERS.

FORGETTING JOE DOHERTY

New York City

We are indebted to Professor David Cole for sounding the alarm ["Secret Tribunal," May 6] about the excesses of the Bush and other crime bills and, of equal importance, for calling our attention to the behavior of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the Fouad Rafeedie case. It is comforting to know that the due process clause has been used to enjoin the I.N.S. from further harassing Rafeedie. The professor may be excused for ignoring the case of Joe Doherty (it will be remembered that Doherty has now completed seven years in a federal prison without ever having been accused of any crime committed in the United States) since neither he nor the Georgetown Law Center, with which he is associated, have paid any attention to this travesty. Their joint lack of concern might be characterized as selective reaction to outrageous government tyranny. *Paul O'Dwyer*
New York City Commission for the United Nations and Consular Corps

COLE REPLIES

New York City

I am indebted to Paul O'Dwyer for adding the case against Joe Doherty to the list of examples of I.N.S. harassment of political activists. Contrary to O'Dwyer's contentions, however, I have followed the Doherty case with interest for many years. I did not mention it in my editorial because, as far as I am aware, the government has not (yet) sought to use undisclosed secret evidence in his case.

Nonetheless, there is no question that the Bush crime bill was also specifically aimed at Doherty. The bill would have denied any foreign national accused of "terrorism" the right to apply for political asylum, the very benefit Doherty is now seeking. In one sense, the Bush crime bill did not discriminate: It sought to remove fundamental rights from *all* immigrants whose political opinions the Administration dislikes. *David Cole*

K.A.L. TECHNICALITIES

Dickinson, Tex.

I'm glad we all agree that the *Izvestia* investigation into the K.A.L. shootdown has produced valuable results ["K.A.L. 007 (Cont.)," June 3]. But readers should note that the new Soviet information lay for many months on the desk of *Nation* editors until my provocative April 23 *Wall Street Journal* article goaded them into publication. What had happened to *The Nation*'s passion to inform its readers of any news on the tragedy?

Observers of the bitter dispute may often be at a loss to judge what to believe or whom to trust, since the technical issues can be intimidating. Many people find it useful in such dilemmas to note which side uses inadequate logic or even dishonest argumentation.

Your editorial denouncing my work is a marvelous test case, since interested readers can note the inflammatory rhetoric, the total lack of specific factual criticism, the allegations of hidden intentions and so forth. One example of *The Nation*'s lying about my article: It falsely claimed that I said the Soviet Union "knew precisely" what it was doing, when I really said only that the pilot admitted realizing the target was not an RC-135. Further comparisons with my *Wall Street Journal* article can easily reveal other misrepresentation in *The Nation*'s commentary. For a copy of the *W.S.J.* article, readers may send me a self-addressed stamped envelope at Rt. 2, Box 350, Dickinson, TX 77539.
James Oberg

NATURAL AND UNNATURAL MISERY

Schenectady, N.Y.

Your editorial "Unnatural Acts" [June 3] was right on the mark for questioning how "natural" the death of hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshis was, when time-tested and affordable cyclone defenses were neglected by the Bangladesh government and the world community. The neglect, in fact, is much more systemic. The multimillion-dollar, twenty-six-project Flood Action Plan coordinated by the World Bank assigns only one relatively poorly financed project to cyclone protection in coastal areas; the protection of the capital city, Dhaka, from much less destructive river floods has been assigned twice as much money as the entire coastal region, home to about 10 million landless migrants and fisher-folk. The World Bank's plan clearly serves to protect the modern, green-revolution farms and other property of the inland elite from river floods. Meanwhile, the poorer, rural majority is increasingly forced to migrate to cyclone-prone islands in the Bay of Bengal, with no protection from the fury of the sea.

In your eagerness to deconstruct the "naturalness" of the disaster, you ascribe the "roots of Bangladesh's serial disasters" primarily to human intervention. Like most politically correct environmentalists, you reiterate the claim that "the floods that afflict the Ganges delta year after year are the direct result of the deforestation of the Indian Himalayas." There is little evidence for this theory, and no amount of tree planting can banish floods from Bangladesh.

Claims of a dramatic increase in deforestation of the Himalayas since the 1950s are turning out to be exaggerated. Deforestation in the Nepalese and Indian Himalayas was already well advanced by the 1750s. By the early part of this century all potential arable land had been put under the plow. Since about 1925 very little actual reduction of forest cover has occurred. Scientists are also questioning if deforestation can be held responsible for soil erosion and flooding along Bangladesh's rivers. It is estimated that if all cultivated and grazing lands in the Nepalese Himalayas were reforested, the downstream flow into the Ganges would be reduced by only about 3 percent.

The second most commonly heard claim, that flooding in Bangladesh has worsened over the years, is equally unsupported. A review of the 150 years of rainfall records for Calcutta shows no significant change. This is not to condone deforestation, but tree planting on the Himalayan slopes alone will not solve the flooding problem.

Perhaps it is time to accept that natural factors beyond human control (like the youth and height of the Himalayas, which make them erode readily, the heavy monsoons and the high seismic activity) do contribute to the misery of Bangladesh. This recognition does not take away from the political struggle to put the safety of the Bangladeshi people at the top of the agenda of any flood-protection plan.
Meera Nanda

HUMAN TIDE

Santa Ana, Calif.

Conspicuously absent from your list of the root causes of Bangladesh's succession of "natural" disasters is overpopulation. Bangladesh has a population density more than twice that of New Jersey, our most densely populated state, and it is packing in another 2.8 million every year. With this overcrowding, people have little choice but to risk living on river deltas, floodplains and exposed coastal islands. More cyclone shelters will treat only a symptom of the real problem—the birth rate. *Leon Kolankiewicz*

NORMAN'S CONQUEST

Washington

"Brown-noser"? "Cheeky-chappie"? *Cheeky Chappie?!* Am I under attack by Alexander Cockburn or Eddie Haskell ["Beat the Devil," June 24]? I mean, Rilly. Norman Podhoretz has come after me more imaginatively than that. To think that in the same quote that so damaged Cockburn's fragile ego I also called him the world's "wittiest" infuriatingly rigid Marxist journalist. Shame on me. And my apologies to the cut-ups at the Sparticist League. *Eric Alterman*

COCKBURN REPLIES

Petrolia, Calif.

More from the cheeky-chappie in the article previously quoted from *The Washington Monthly*: "The Nation has earned the reputation in Washington as something of a museum piece, written by bearded Jewish radicals for sixties holdovers and public librarians." Scarcely arrived inside the Beltway, Eric, and already you've been there too long. Get out and around and meet some public librarians. Maybe if you play your cards right, they'll tell you how to spell Spartacus.
Alexander Cockburn

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EDITORIALS.

Bedfellas

A sure sign that America has won the cold war is the license American Presidents have to lecture Soviet citizens on the virtues of capitalism, to meet with rebels and dissenters in Moscow and generally to meddle in Soviet domestic affairs. It would hardly be a Moscow summit without the current White House representative hawking his ideological wares and promoting his policies to any audience he chooses. On the other hand, not since Nikita Khrushchev predicted "We will bury you," in 1956, has a Soviet leader in America gone out on a limb for his own side. Mikhail Gorbachev has had ample opportunities to tour a black ghetto (as Fidel Castro once did in Harlem), work an unemployment line or stoop alongside migrant farm workers during harvest time. Instead, he makes a beeline for businessmen in Minneapolis and right-wing academics in California, with an occasional nod at liberal intellectuals, not one of whom you would want next to you on the barricades.

George Bush came dangerously close to assuming adviser status to the Soviet government on his most recent summit

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jaunt. He made the obligatory pitch for the free market and he breakfasted with a large group of citizens he thought were rising young capitalists (many, however, were social-democratic ringers). But by and large he politicked for Gorbachev and the revised post-Soviet confederation the Communist reformers are projecting. So meddlesome was Bush, in fact, that even Gorbachev's supporters fear a popular backlash down the road.

Bush and Gorbachev are in bed together for good reasons. Both will probably be facing re-election campaigns in 1992 (barring health problems for one, coup problems for the other), and both will advertise their successful conduct of foreign affairs while avoiding mention of their egregious failures of domestic policy. In that sense, the leaders need each other. They've given each other an arms reduction treaty, however incomplete (the arms race is still in full swing, and the overkill capacity of both camps is virtually undiminished). They will serve as co-hosts of an Arab-Israeli conference, if their guests are in the mood to attend. And they will do what little they can for their respective economies by attracting and encouraging U.S. private investment in the Soviet Union; for the first time, Bush pointed to the enormous potential market for American business in Russia, presumably ahead of the Europeans and the Japanese.

Meanwhile, meddling on a lower level continues apace. Americans by the jetload are buzzing around Moscow promoting one or another new political party with a rhetorical preference for "democracy" and "capitalism." Most of the new parties are happening only in the apartments of their founders and friends. Not one of them—not even the partylike formation recently announced by former Gorbachev allies Eduard Shevardnadze and Alexander Yakovlev—yet has the potential to become a true opposition to the Communists. They are still as gnats unto the (white) elephant of the C.P.-U.S.S.R.

Obituaries for the Communist Party are definitely premature. Its power—and historical roots—are simply not analogous to the various parties of Eastern Europe now fallen from grace. Much is made of the fact that the party has lost several million members lately. But it has also signed up more members in the past year than there are in all the other parties. In thousands of towns and outlying cities, not to mention workplaces, social organizations, the police and military, its centrality is unquestioned.

What's more, the divisions within the party are deep and wide—greater by far than those between U.S. Republicans and Democrats. It's often said that the Soviet Union is a multiparty state with one party, while the United States is a one-party state with two parties. And for now, each of the states has an interest in preserving the status quo in the other. For that reason, summits these days are much more likely to feature pats on the back than punches in the nose.

CHOOSING SIDES

When it comes to protecting civil rights, the Bush Administration makes Dwight Eisenhower look good. In 1957, Ike sent federal marshals to Little Rock, Arkansas, to protect black children attending a formerly white high school. A generation later, the Bush Administration has turned that legacy on its head by siding with Randall Terry's fanatical antiabortion campaign in Wichita. Departing Attorney General Dick Thornburgh wants to take the Wichita abortion-rights battle out of the hands of a courageous federal judge, Patrick Kelly, and to remove the federal marshals Kelly ordered to protect the constitutional rights of women entering Wichita clinics. His cynical action has nothing to do with the free-speech rights of Terry's crusaders.

The Justice Department's stand goes radically beyond the symbolic support tendered to foes of abortion by the Reagan and Bush administrations; it renders palpable assistance to the anti-choice movement's fanatical fringe, which wants to veto women's right to choose with mob rule.

We Know You, Al

When the Senate Ethics Committee can award a bill of pretty-good health to Senator Alfonse D'Amato, one of our more ethically challenged legislators, it's time to consider disposing of the committee and its unconvincing appearance of doing its duty. New York City Consumer Affairs Commissioner Mark Green, who ran against D'Amato in 1986 (and whose campaign I served with), filed a complaint with the committee two years ago. Green's move could be seen as sour grapes; but his petition, which compelled the committee to start an inquiry, was supported by a stack of news accounts that suggested improper behavior by D'Amato in fourteen different episodes—high even by Senate standards.

The committee's statement, which dismissed most of the complaints and mildly chastised D'Amato on one count, inspires little faith in its investigations. Take the incident in which new federally subsidized houses for poor minorities in D'Amato's hometown ended up with his associates. A logical explanation is that D'Amato must have had a hand in it. But the committee responds with one sentence to note there is "insufficient credible evidence . . . to conclude that a violation within the Committee's jurisdiction has occurred." What did happen? There is no explanation for the skeptical taxpayer, who has every reason to believe wrongdoing transpired.

The committee found "insufficient credible evidence" to substantiate the allegation that D'Amato pressured the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide a disproportionate amount of funds to programs in Puerto Rico that benefited developers who had contributed to his campaigns. The committee had a problem: Several key witnesses took the Fifth—a grand jury is probing the matter. The committee could have granted limited-use immunity and taken statements in private, thereby not jeopardizing the criminal proceedings, as happened in the Oliver North case. But it threw up its hands and closed the matter.

The committee's statement skates over important material. It does poke D'Amato for being "negligent" in allowing his

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brother Armand to use his Senate office for lobbying efforts on behalf of Unisys, a military contractor. (Federal prosecutors are looking into that.) But the committee had no comment on the story in *Newsday* that the Senator's staff previously spurned the company because it had not supported D'Amato's campaigns. It also had little to say on the widely reported charge that D'Amato asked U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani to go easy on some Mafia figures—one of ten separate allegations that the committee lumps together and disposes of with one summary statement: "no credible evidence."

The committee should reveal how it evaluated news reports claiming D'Amato has extorted contributions and tried to help mobsters. Instead the committee says, We didn't find anything, trust us. The message is, a senator can get away with almost anything. None other than Jesse Helms has griped about the attitude of his peers. He released a damning report prepared by Special Counsel Robert Bennett on the Alan Cranston portion of the Keating Five affair. (Helms has been quiet, however, regarding fellow Republican D'Amato.) The Bennett-Helms report calls for censuring Cranston for doing favors for campaign contributors much as D'Amato did, and for releasing a comprehensive report, which is also needed in the D'Amato case. Helms suggests deep-sixing the committee and replacing it with a panel made up of retired judges or senators. He's on the right track, but the better alternative—short of voting all weasels out—may be to adopt some sort of special counsel system. With its decision on D'Amato, the Ethics Committee shows that senators cannot police themselves and that the entire body has descended to D'Amato's level.

DAVID CORN

Lesson Unlearned

It took the death of an innocent man seventy-six years ago to teach the nation a lesson about the importance of federal court review in protecting fundamental rights. It took fifty-eight senators and a couple Supreme Court decisions recently to unlearn that tragic lesson.

In 1915 an Atlanta jury sentenced a Jewish man, Leo Frank, to death for raping a Christian woman. At trial, Frank made no defense because an anti-Semitic mob chased him from the courtroom. Frank was innocent. Years later an eyewitness fingered another man. Frank could have been saved. After his conviction in the Georgia courts, he petitioned a federal court for habeas corpus review of the legality of his conviction. In a much-criticized decision, the Supreme Court denied Frank's request, saying that a federal court had no power to interfere with a state conviction—no matter how unjust—once a state court had approved the outcome "upon a full review."

Eight years later the Court reversed itself, overturning the death sentences of five black men for killing a white man. This time the Supreme Court granted habeas corpus—in the process adopting Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes's opinion that once an illegally convicted defendant's resort to the state courts "has been had in vain," the federal courts' "power to secure fundamental rights" through habeas corpus "becomes a duty."

That rule has been endorsed countless times since. Between 1976 and 1990, federal courts were forced to correct constitutional violations in 40 percent of the cases in which state courts, "upon a full review," were ready to let executions proceed. In 1986 federal habeas corpus saved a Florida man from being executed based on testimony the prosecutor knew was false. In 1987 habeas corpus saved two Florida men after it was discovered that a witness had testified that each was the sole trigger man in the same killing. And in 1988 habeas corpus saved a black man in North Carolina from being executed based on testimony by a witness who had previously told the police the culprit was white.

Although it took an innocent man's execution to teach it, there is much to celebrate in the lesson of Leo Frank—especially in this bicentennial year of the Bill of Rights. The Senate and the Supreme Court staged a strange celebration indeed. On June 26 the Senate voted 58 to 40 to abolish habeas corpus and federal court review—incorporating into the bill the very words "full review" used to send Leo Frank to his death. In April the Supreme Court refused to let a condemned man file a second habeas petition even though a prosecutor's prevarication kept a flagrant violation from being challenged in the first petition. And in June the Court ruled that a prisoner's violation of a state procedural technicality (his lawyer filed a document a few days late) prevented federal courts from correcting constitutional defects in his capital trial.

Certainly society needs to protect itself against violent crime, but the lesson of the Leo Frank case is that even the most admirable social ends—deterring crime—can't justify means that destroy civil liberties.

JAMES S. LIEBMAN

James S. Liebman is vice dean of Columbia Law School and a member of the American Bar Association's Task Force on Death Penalty Habeas Corpus.

Fiers Alarm

July 7: Slow day at the W.H. Sunu will no longer walk to any of our offices. Said, "How can the President reach me if I'm walking?" But the secure line not installed in his sedan chair so he took limo to Baltimore and caught a sub to NYC for meeting of the High IQ club. Meanwh., I went to CIA for lunch w/Gates. Ate in Office Entertainment Center and listened in on the offices he's bugged. He gets over 40 channels! (At W.H., we only get 3.)

Then tuned in to Walsh's office, hoping to hear he's ready to close the whole loser investigation—but Walsh was talking to Fiers! Fiers ratted on Gregg, George, Abrams, Casey, North, P-dexter, R.R. and *was starting to talk about the Prez* when something went wacky with the transmission and we were picking up Noriega's cell. (He was teaching the guards how to sing "Kumbaya.")

Prez. v. upset. "How long has Walsh been after the Bush tail? Let's ballpark it: He's kept this frantically anti-me show running longer than *South Pacific*. But he—*it's an obsession*. The man is obsessed. But he can't cross the Rubicon. *Keeps moving that goalpost.* Won't toss that towel in out there till

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he's Sam Ervined me out of office. Wants me to eat some kind of marvelous legal cheese. Well, the Bush team is not going to eat cheese on this one. *Not in a cheese-eating mode.* You gurus need to get this problem perspectived and then game-plan our strategy A.S.A.P."

Prez had me fill out one of Sunu's Potential Crisis Alert Forms. Stole a copy, of course, which I hope will help me sell my book and get out of here. Sunu driving me *crazy.*

POTENTIAL CRISIS ALERT FORM

Potential Crisis Number 1

Alan Fiers's testimony will expose our cover-up of Iran/*contra*, revealing to the country that the highest levels of the Reagan and Bush administrations, including you, President Bush, were aware of, favored and participated in the covert operations. *This will destroy your credibility and trigger your impeachment.*

DOWNSIDE: Impeachment could affect your popularity.

UPSIDE: Early retirement means you get Social Security and Medicare benefits, if those programs don't go bankrupt thanks to the budget deficit, the S&L bailout, the imminent crisis of the banking system and the recession.

SOLUTION: Make the Vice President available for interviews. If that doesn't cinch it, unleash the Best of Quayle video, Volume One. This begins with his speech to the American Legion in which he said, "The Civil War was the best war we've ever had because when you're fighting with yourself, you're always going to win."

Potential Crisis Number 2

Fiers's testimony could give the Democrats the issue they've needed for the '92 election.

DOWNSIDE: There is never a downside in running for President against a Democrat.

UPSIDE: Gates heard over WCIA's channel to Foley's office that the Democrats are afraid to go after you *because the public may perceive that they are going after you*! Besides, any attempt by the Democrats to smear you with this would suggest that they are planning to run someone against you, and I heard they weren't going to bother this time. Too humiliating and they would rather just put their $90 million in the bank and earn interest. History has taught us that the only person a Democrat isn't afraid to attack is another Democrat. (The last time the Democrats helped defeat someone for President was in 1980, when Ted Kennedy ran against Carter.)

SOLUTION: See to it that the President remains a Republican.

Potential Crisis Number 3

If it is revealed that you have broken the law, the Constitution calls for your impeachment. This will throw the issue before Congress, where *the matter could be in the news for months.*

DOWNSIDE: This will distract from your foreign policy agenda.

UPSIDE: This will distract from your domestic agenda.

SOLUTION: Should it come to impeachment hearings, we will invoke executive privilege and refuse to testify or turn over documents or tapes. (Gates has already had several tons of tapes flown to the Philippines, where they were dropped into that volcano.) This will force the matter to go before the Supreme Court, where the constitutionality of executive privilege will be challenged. Then we're safe. With the new Court, the Constitution isn't used very much as a legal reference anymore. You can run for re-election as planned.

August 3: Got the PCAF back from the Prez this A.M. He O.K.'d it, but in a personal note at the top he wrote: "WHAT IF THE PUBLIC BEGINS TO FOLLOW THIS ON THEIR OWN, STUDYING THE WEALTH OF ALREADY INCRIMINATING INFORMATION IN BOOKS AND JOURNALS, AND PUTS THE PIECES TOGETHER BY THEMSELVES, OUT OF A CITIZEN'S NORMAL INTEREST IN THE WORKINGS OF GOVERNMENT?"

It's nice to know that even in the face of a major scandal, the President is able to keep his sense of humor.

DOUGLAS MCGRATH

Douglas McGrath is writing a one-man show called State of the Nation.

★

ADIEU, MR. R.

Well, Jay, John D's first son's son's son,
Announced at last he isn't going to run.
We'll miss him standing at those barnyard gates,
And shaking hands with farmers as he states,
While pointing at a hog pen's muddy loam,
"It's simply lovely. Why, it's just like home."

He conjures up the hollers
And hills of West Virginny:
Although he's not so poor,
He's very tall and skinny.

He did raise questions—all unanswered now:
Could he, in fact, know how to milk a cow?
(Although I'm hardly expert at this stuff,
It seems to me his legs won't fold enough.)
We're still not sure, despite the razzmatazz,
How many johns his mansion really has.

For what they call a balanced race,
He was a fine augmenter:
With Jesse Left, and Bentsen Right,
And Rockefeller Center.

Calvin Trillin

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN

■ Pump Up the Pretense

In June Reebok, maker of $150 sneakers that inflate, received an award from the International Human Rights Law Group. Reebok quite generously sponsored the Amnesty International rock music tour and confers an annual $100,000 Human Rights Award. The company has an official "human rights philosophy," which states, in part, "We recognize that profitability is not our only rationale for existence. Reebok [has] . . . a responsibility to contribute to the national and universal desire to be rid of injustice, poverty, and other ills that gnaw away at the social fabric." At about the time that Reebok's socially minded executives were deciding where to hang their award, its corporate lobbyists were busy opposing legislation that would set conditions on the granting of most-favored-nation trade status upon a premier abuser of human rights, China. About 15 percent of Reebok's shoes are produced in that country. But that, says Jack Douglas, the company's general counsel, is not why Reebok has fought the legislation. Human rights are best served when U.S. companies do business in China and influence its society, he explained, echoing the line promoted by all commercial groups that have battled the legislation. "Our Chinese employees," he proudly notes, "are exposed to Western business practices, ideas and beliefs, and dress, through their contact with Reebok employees."

Asked if Reebokkers felt bad siding against the human rights community, Douglas claimed that activists inhabited both sides of the debate. "That's ludicrous," Mike Jendrzejczyk, Washington director of Asia Watch, responded. "Not one human rights group of any kind supports unconditional renewal" of most-favored-nation status for China.

Reebok was not the only hip sneaker company allied with the old men of China. Nike was on the same team. Spike Lee's favorite footwear manufacturer enlisted heavyweight Democrat Neil Goldschmidt, former Oregon governor, for its campaign. Before pressing Nike's case with at least one prominent senator, Goldschmidt did not register with Congress as a lobbyist, as he probably should have. This is the man who, back in 1989, wailed that his party had become too closely identified with interest-group lobbies.

■ The Smell of Hypocrisy

It was an unusual event for public interest advocates. Employees of environmental and safe energy groups were treated to a lavish spread—shelled spicy shrimp, salmon, fresh salads—and open bars set up in the Smithsonian's Museum of Natural History. Such largesse routinely flows in Washington at receptions sponsored by trade associations, military contractors and other corporate powers. The occasion this time was a screening of *Naked Gun 2½* to honor the Safe Energy Communication Council, which is composed of Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and others. Inasmuch as the film has a plot between gags, its villains are oil, coal and nuclear industry executives who scheme to prevent President Bush from adopting an energy plan based on conservation and renewable resources (as if that were a possibility off screen). At the event the star of the film, Leslie Nielsen, and the director, David Zucker, praised the assembled for their devotion to the environment. If only Nielsen were so committed. When not playing the fumbling Lieut. Frank Drebin, he is a pitchman for Coors beer, the sale of which enriches a family that bankrolls conservative outfits (such as the Heritage Foundation) that oppose the work of the groups honored at the reception. Even *Reader's Digest* called Joseph Coors, who runs the company with his brother, "one of the country's leading anti-environmentalists." Nielsen's ads may have more impact on environmental policy than his presence at a feel-good event.

Most movie premieres in Washington serve less lofty goals. Typical was a preview screening of *Robin Hood* held earlier this summer. Time-Warner invited influential members of Congress and, more important, influential staff aides to see the film. The conglomerate rented the best theater in town, provided popcorn and, after the movie, bused the crowd to a fine restaurant in Georgetown for a free dinner. There's no law that says aides and legislators can't accept such gratuities, the invitations for which come from the same friendly lobbyists who phone the following week to discuss legislative matters of interest to their firms.

■ The Reluctant Chairman

After months of hand-wringing, the Democratic leadership in Congress finally decided to examine formally the allegation that the Reagan-Bush campaign in 1980 promised future arms shipments to Iranians in return for a delay in the release of the U.S. hostages. Republicans howled in protest, but there is good news for the G.O.P. On the House side, Representative Lee Hamilton will chair a special investigative task force; in the Senate, Terry Sanford, chair of the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, will guide the probe. Setting up a task force was a compromise that Foley handed to Republican leaders, who did not want the inquiry based in Hamilton's Middle East subcommittee, where the G.O.P. is represented mostly by moderates. Republicans can now place their best political attack dogs on the task force.

The choice of Hamilton is curious. According to House leadership aides, he consistently opposed convening an inquiry. He never made his reasons public. But an obvious suggestion comes to mind. Hamilton has chaired the House Iran/*contra* committee, the Intelligence Committee and the Middle East subcommittee; if there was an "October surprise" deal, he must be one of the biggest saps in Congress. Some House aides believe that Speaker Foley offered the post to Hamilton anticipating a rejection. When Hamilton accepted, the speculation runs, he did so to block Representative Robert Torricelli, a leading advocate for an inquiry, from getting the job. Unlike Hamilton, Sanford has been enthusiastic for an inquiry in the Senate. But he is also the chair of the Ethics Committee, which recently whitewashed Senator Alfonse D'Amato.

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

The Old In/Out

I didn't much care for the theory and practice of outing when the subject first came up. This brusque wrenching of the closet door, albeit conducted by gay persons fired with high moral purpose, seemed kindred to similar sorts of door wrenching conducted by all the usual swine, fired with desire to invade individual privacy and make their victims writhe.

Over the past couple of weeks the issue has gone critical with the fuss about the outing of Pete Williams, the ranking Pentagon flack and longtime associate of Defense Secretary Dick Cheney.

Williams, formally known as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, came to the attention of Michelangelo Signorile, the Stormin' Norman of the outing crowd. Signorile used to write for the now defunct *OutWeek* and took a slash-and-burn approach to outing. Gay men in Washington called him to say that on the one hand Williams was promulgating the propaganda of a Defense Department that persecutes gay people while on the other hand he was well known around town as a shirt-lifter.

So Signorile began to conduct an investigation—otherwise known as making lots of telephone calls in the course of which he talked to a couple of Williams's boyfriends—but *OutWeek* went belly up before he could get the word out. *The Village Voice* decided against running the piece, and it finally ended up in *The Advocate*, accompanied by an editorial statement by the magazine's editor in chief, Richard Rouilard. Rouilard said that Williams's "silent complicity encourages the continuation of this vile and despotic activity" (the military's blanket exclusion of gay men and lesbians). "The U.S. military is awash in lies and hypocrisy. Williams is the proof that we are not perverts, liable to be blackmailed at every turn, incapable of containing our sexual urges when necessary [how does he know?]—all the stereotypical bullshit that is used to justify this purge of good soldiers. For much less than the very same activities Williams has been involved in, many of these soldiers have had their lives ruined."

So, concluded Rouilard, "We do not want to ruin Pete Williams's life. We are asking Pete Williams to confirm what is true: that he has security clearance on the highest level; that he is an excellent and effective spokesman; that he has the confidence of the President, the secretary of defense, and his coworkers; and that his sexuality has not interfered with his position. Except when he hides it."

I didn't find Rouilard's editorial particularly instructive and called up John Scagliotti, maker of the famous historical documentary *Before Stonewall*. What he didn't care for, John said, were the anti-outers who fostered the notion that homosexuality is something to be ashamed of, like those newspapers that would not print Jack Anderson's column reporting *The Advocate*'s story about Williams. The test for outing, John said, should be "Has the person benefited from being in the closet in careerist terms, in the sense of actively pretending to be something he or she is not? There's a difference between a passive closet, in which you simply survive and hope for the best, and the active closet, which involves putting on a heterosexual mask and promoting yourself as such, which is in ethical contradiction to your actual life. You've made the choice. You're living an actual lie, bringing girls to the company ball and so on.

"So, think about a gay actor who has made the decision to advance his career by pretending to be heterosexual. But by doing that he is insulting and oppressing all those who are already out. Take Barry Diller, who is in a position of enormous power at Fox. Why doesn't he push for a gay and lesbian TV show, which I could produce, which would be a gay version of *In Living Color*? Now, no one wants to out little people, gay teachers and so on—unless gay teachers are publicly anti-gay—but I would out people who are gay and yet are promoting heterosexuality.

"I believe as a general proposition that people should come out. It would be better for them. But at the same time I understand that such a public coming out might hurt or confuse children, parents, etc. But just as there's a difference between being passively and actively in the closet, you can be actively or passively out. In the former case you are publicly espousing a cause, and in the latter, passive case, you are attempting to live a gay or lesbian life within the limits of what's possible for you and not too hurtful to parents, children, etc. One of the reasons straight people don't understand outing is that they don't understand what it's like to be gay. It's all more complicated than they think."

Arguing against his paper's decision not to publish Williams's name, Richard Goldstein of *The Village Voice* said it certainly would have been O.K. in the fifties to out J. Edgar Hoover, Roy Cohn and Cardinal Spellman, or in the eighties to out Terry Dolan and other New Right crusaders. This raises the question, Should straights go into the outing business? I recounted to a gay friend of mine all the stories about a former Secretary of State, undoubted supporter of the repression and ghastly harassment of gays in the U.S. military, who'd supposedly had a boyfriend in London. (This was around the time that a former Secretary of Defense had a girlfriend in Oxford. Never were conferences at Ditchley more zealously attended.) So I asked my gay friend how he would feel if I went into the outing business. He said, a little stiffly, that he would rather it remained a gay concession.

Meanwhile the mainstream press has been resolutely inning Williams, attending but not reporting press conferences held by gay outers, writing and then killing stories about the whole Williams affair. There is something bizarre about the hyenas virtuously strapping on their muzzles, but not so surprising when you think about it, since the mainstream press thrives by exposés contrived on its terms and not the terms set by people like Signorile or Rouilard.

As always, the British press has demonstrated this truism with appalling clarity. My colleague Rich McKerrow reports from London that at the end of July a group calling itself Faggots Rooting Out Closet Sexuality (FROCS) announced it was

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

going to plaster London with posters of prominent citizens, each adorned with the words "queer," "dyke," "homo," etc. The designated 200 outees were said to include a Member of Parliament from each party, several judges and well-known cops and at least one member of the royal family.

The British tabloid press rushed for the high ground, bellowing outrage at the proposed mass outing. Jean Rook, a columnist for the *Daily Express*, called members of FROCS a bunch of "mincing militants" and "ferocious faggots," a "limp-wristed army of insecure Wicked Fairies." (Apropos "mincing militants," it is worth remembering that the British papers spend much of their time denouncing and exposing members of Militant Tendency, a Trotskyist "entryist" grouping that has made strenuous and sometimes successful efforts to penetrate the lower portions of the Labor Party.)

The *Daily Mail* similarly denounced the outing campaign as despicable and vicious: "The decision about whether a homosexual wishes to go public should be private. To expose those who wish to keep their sexual orientations to themselves must in many cases be wantonly cruel." Back in 1976 the *Daily Mail* outed a Labor M.P. named Maureen Colquhoun by reporting that she had left her husband for a woman. Colquhoun duly confirmed she was a lesbian and three years later lost her seat in the House of Commons.

The Sun, owned by Barry Diller's boss, Rupert Murdoch, was also in the forefront of the FROCS-bashers, roaring that the FROCS have "no right to use other people's lives for their own warped political ends." In 1988 *The Sun* paid out £1 million as part of a libel settlement after suggesting that Elton John was involved with "vice boys."

Came the hour of the promised grand outing and the hacks mustered at a FROCS press conference, notebooks akimbo, at which point FROCS said the whole thing was a hoax designed to expose Britain's "hysterical, homophobic media." Maybe so, maybe not. Rich says there is some indication that FROCS got panicked by the uproar. But whatever the original purpose, the point about the press was well made.

J. Edgar Hoover used the gossip columnist Walter Winchell to out Commies. Gossip usually has a repressive function in the mainstream press, which is why outing has to remain a subterranean, countercultural activity. Yet even in the counterculture, or at the level of the offbeat and unofficial, gossip always has the twin function of being liberating—letting the sunlight in—and repressive, in the sense of exposing the personal and the private, naming names and thus probably hurting people. Gossip represents visible fault lines at the social surface, reflecting subterranean, gradual shifts in our social attitudes. Although the liberating and repressive functions are both at work, given the structure of media ownership and control, the repressive function is usually dominant.

Outing, which itself is shifting from a kind of anarchic dada to something more responsible, has clearly changed consciousness. Williams's boss, Cheney, has been compelled to distance himself from traditional Pentagon policy toward gay people, something he certainly would not have done, or been pushed toward by the press, before Signorile began the journalistic exercise of outing Williams. This does not mean that the repressive aspect of the practice could not easily become dominant, as the mainstream press would dearly desire.

Footnote: Among the briefers during the Persian Gulf war was a Navy man from the Defense Intelligence Agency called David Harrington. During his tour as a naval attaché in Moscow back at the start of the 1980s Harrington won first prize at the U.S./U.K. military attachés' drag ball, appearing in the humble vestments of a Russian maid. One U.S. military attaché who witnessed Harrington's triumph says that he had had no idea how seriously some officers took the event. He merely borrowed his wife's nightdress. But others imported glorious costumery from Helsinki. On the big night a fleet of cars transported the gowned participants from their domestic quarters in central Moscow to a dacha on the outskirts. If the K.G.B. had been on its toes, the cold war might have gone the other way.

Lesson for the Day

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and thou be among the lowest of the low, even among those that shall be the most despicable among the seed of Adam, those seeking bequests for universities and kindred centers of so-called learning . . .

So it was written in Genesis 3:14 *et seq.* and so it came to pass that on June 5 in the Year of Our Lord 1991 the *Tucson Citizen* reported that the University of Arizona was seeking a major financial contribution from the estate of Kemper Marley Sr., a land and liquor magnate who met his Maker in what was undoubtedly a difficult interview in June 1990, at the age of 83.

In the Year of Our Lord 1976, Don Bolles, an investigative reporter for *The Arizona Republic*, was killed by a car bomb. Convicted murderer John Harvey Adamson later testified that he was hired to kill Bolles for writing stories that cost Kemper Marley a seat on the state Racing Commission. Two others tried in the murder, James Robison and Max Dunlap, a close friend of Marley's, were convicted of paying Adamson to kill Bolles. Their convictions were later overturned by the Arizona Supreme Court, though Robison has been jailed on unrelated charges and Dunlap has since been indicted again and is scheduled for a hearing in Maricopa County Superior Court.

It was written in the *Tucson Citizen* for June 5 that lo, the University of Arizona Foundation was asking the Marley family foundation for a $6 million gift, in exchange for which the university would consider naming the almost completed seven-story Agricultural Laboratory Building for Marley and would set before it cherubim singing his praises and the graven image of a fundraiser bowed down at the feet of Marley, even into the dust.

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ARTICLES.

AN INTERNATION STORY

Eastern Europe's Nuclear Window

R. DENNIS HAYES

Budapest

Barely five years old, Chernobyl's cautionary tale could end oddly in the heart of Eastern Europe. To most observers, Chernobyl signaled the demise of nuclear power here. An antinuclear status quo was to evolve much as the Three Mile Island accident, environmental protest and cost overruns doomed nuclear expansion in the United States in the 1980s.

Now Eastern Europe verges on a renaissance of nuclear power. The sponsors, a coalition of Western nuclear firms, government officials and native and expatriate technocrats, are poised to erect new reactors and rescue old ones in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. A distinctly corporate ecology casts nuclear power as environmental remedy for ailing forests and fouled air. Nuclear diplomats, including the indomitable Edward Teller—the father of the U.S. hydrogen bomb and Star Wars weapons programs, and Hungary's native son—shuttle tirelessly to cultivate the Western nuclear initiatives.

The Western firms—among them Siemens KWU of Germany; Electricité de France (EdF); Westinghouse, General Atomics and Bechtel of the United States; and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (A.E.C.L.)—have showered Czechoslovakia and Hungary with feasibility studies, offers and bids to build nuclear facilities of nearly every description. These include start-up financing for nuclear power stations; an untested blending of Soviet, Czechoslovak and Western fission technologies to salvage old reactors; and a variety of experimental nuclear heating plants. Although the industry is closely guarding details, its schemes to privatize state energy agencies and launch joint ventures are receiving the interested cooperation of government officials here. And why not? Nuclear emissaries are promising tens of thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in investment—the largest influx yet of capital to the region. Until now, however, the debate over nuclear power has taken place behind closed doors. It has just begun to engage Czechoslovakia and Hungary's environmental movements, which are among the most formidable in Eastern Europe.

To its offers and promises the nuclear industry is attaching strings that extend well beyond Eastern Europe. At least two firms propose nuclear plants with generating capacities that exceed Czechoslovakia or Hungary's domestic needs. The surplus capacity would allow export of electricity to Western Europe, in exchange for hosting what amounts to a continent-wide expansion of nuclear-generated power—outflanking Western European bans and grass-roots opposition.

Left untold by the lobbyists is how ill suited nuclear technology is to the region's energy demands and economic straits, not to mention how harmful it may be to European public health. The nuclear diplomacy has already yielded an agreement to keep open a flawed reactor in Slovakia not far from the Austrian border. Other endangering prospects include extensive uranium mining in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and a generation of additional nuclear waste in a region still struggling to contain Chernobyl's radioactive legacy.

Earlier this year, Vladimir Meciar, then Premier of Czechoslovakia's republic of Slovakia, returned from Germany with an offer from Siemens to build a nuclear power plant near Kecerovce. It would be Czechoslovakia's fifth nuclear station; two are operating and two are under construction. According to a government report, such a nuclear facility costs $2.6 billion, a sum that surpasses total Western investment in all of post-Communist Eastern Europe to date. It is certainly more than Slovakia can afford. Nuclear Power International, a new German-French venture combining Siemens and Framatone, offered to arrange initial financing with a German utility. By exporting excess electricity to Germany, Slovakia would repay its nuclear brokers and eventually turn a profit. That day may never come, according to one source. He suspects that the construction, operating and decommissioning costs, like those of virtually every nuclear plant, are "seriously underestimated."

Without financial and technological assistance from the West, the two nuclear stations under construction in Czechoslovakia might never come on-line, and power units at one of the two operating stations might shut down. That's because nuclear plants in Czechoslovakia (and Hungary) are outfitted with Soviet technology adapted with mixed results by Skoda, Czechoslovakia's largest industrial concern, and Zavody Prumyslove Automatizace, a subcontractor. The Z.P.A. control units, to take just one example, are widely regarded as unreliable, according to government reports. And the control units are crucial to nuclear safety. Another component has been implicated in at least three fires at nuclear plants in the past year, two occurring at the Jaslovske Bohunice plant in Slovakia and one at the Dukovany station in Moravia. The fires, which were underreported in the West, ignited when voltage regulators failed, causing circuitry to overheat.

In addition, radioactive contamination has shown up in water near the Bohunice plant, the result of several unsound technologies, including the Skoda-designed A-1 blocks. Two accidents prompted a hasty decommissioning of the A-1 blocks nearly fifteen years ago. Other probable sources of contamination are two of Bohunice's four operating power blocks, the so-called V-1 blocks. These are of an older Soviet design roundly condemned for flaws by Western European nuclear safety experts inspecting similar blocks in former East Germany and Bulgaria. Those V-1 blocks are being shut

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down. An inspection at Bohunice found dozens of safety problems but proclaimed its V-1 blocks sound enough to continue operating. That conclusion wasn't entirely surprising. The inspectors included representatives from Westinghouse, Siemens and the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as from Austria, which cast the lone dissenting vote. Austria remains "very nervous" about the status quo, says Ivo Slavotinek, a Prague-based energy consultant. Bohunice is situated forty miles from Austria, where nuclear power remains illegal. An accident would force most of Vienna to evacuate immediately. According to Juraj Mesik, vice president of the Slovakian Greens and former adviser to the Federal Ministry of the Environment, the Bohunice plant is nestled above Slovakia's most seismically active region. Austria has offered Slovakia the equivalent of $280 million in electricity imports to shut down Bohunice's V-1 blocks.

Mesik says that "Skoda realizes there is no future in Soviet nuclear technology and is eager to cultivate joint ventures with Western nuclear firms." One has been signed: Siemens received permission to supply control units for the Mochovce nuclear station, one of the two being built here by Skoda. Siemens is bidding, as are Westinghouse and others, on the supply of technology similar to the Temelin reactors, scheduled to go on-line in 1994. A Westinghouse spokesperson told me that Skoda selected Westinghouse as the "preferred partner" in an agreement that "would allow Westinghouse to team with Skoda to design, manufacture, construct and bid all future nuclear units" in Czechoslovakia as well as for export. The agreement is not yet final.

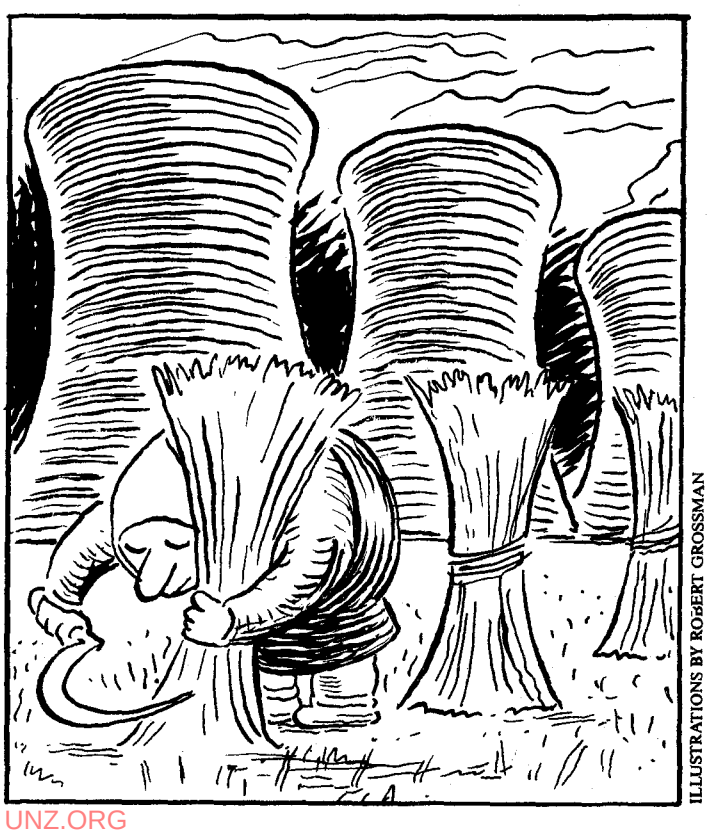
The Siemens and Westinghouse offers could rescue an ambitious Czechoslovak nuclear expansion program drafted years ago by Communist central planners. Currently the country derives 27 percent of its electricity from nuclear sources. If construction is completed on the next two stations, nuclear dependency would rise to 50 percent. With the proposed Siemens plant, plus one planned for either Blahutovice or Tetov, the country's nuclear dependency would approach 60 percent, close to that of France.

Hungary, which depends on nuclear power for 30 percent of its electricity, is actively considering studies, bids or offers from a Westinghouse consortium (including Bechtel, Ansaldo of Italy and the INI companies of Spain: Initec, Ensa and Enusa), Siemens, EdF and A.E.C.L. to build its second nuclear power plant, near Paks on the Danube. According to Zsuzsa Foltanyi, a biological and chemical engineer with a Budapest-based energy policy group, EdF has offered up to 70 percent financing and 1,000 megawatts of excess generating capacity. EdF would then export electricity, perhaps to Italy or Romania. (EdF could not be reached for comment.) This could involve a joint-venture relationship and, if EdF has its way, privatization of the regional nuclear agency, which is "very dangerous," Foltanyi says, because it would streamline nuclear licensing procedures at the expense of public safety. Warranting such concern, Foltanyi adds, are the preliminary findings of a study suggesting that the proposed nuclear site is seismically active. The Hungarian government is expected to respond to the Western offers this autumn, with a decision likely by 1992.

In addition, Siemens, A.E.C.L. and General Atomics seek to build nuclear heating plants at several sites in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Incorporating a new wave of nuclear technology, each plant would generate as little as ten megawatts to provide "district" heating for 1,500 to 3,000 apartments.

With the Soviet nuclear program in post-Chernobyl disarray, and with much of the industrially developed world unwilling or unable to sponsor nuclear expansion, the former Eastern bloc countries represent the largest new market opportunity for Western nuclear power in years. The nuclear West wants to claim what the Soviets have abandoned. Staking that claim, however, means enticing governments into profit-sharing ventures and quarantining the Chernobyl syndrome. Pro-nuclear forces hope this proves more manageable than containing the heavy isotopes still radiating from Chernobyl.

Chernobyl's political visibility is improbably low in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, both of which border the Soviet Union. "No one was really informed about Chernobyl" until after the Soviet-aligned regimes began falling in 1989, says Mesik. In Hungary, Chernobyl's health and ecological impacts "remain hidden from environmental groups" and the general public, according to Foltanyi. A study tracking fallout from Chernobyl in Hungary, conducted by the country's Institute for Radiation-biology and Radiation-chemistry, has been under way for some time. The institute refuses to share the results of the study, even with the government, says Foltanyi. "Under the Communist regime," she explains, "the [current] head of the institute had a military position. The military tradition encourages secrecy and lack of responsibility among scientists and researchers." Foltanyi and others are pressuring the institute to release its findings.



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In Czechoslovakia, where lawmakers are drafting federal and national constitutions and grappling with the highly charged issue of Slovak independence, political confusion distracts attention from environmental issues, including Chernobyl. During the week marking Chernobyl's fifth anniversary, the confusion was riveting. Nationalists occupied the Slovak Parliament in Bratislava—and the headlines. Meanwhile, lobbyists for the nuclear industry have been selling nuclear power as environmentally, and even politically, desirable here. In Bratislava, according to Mesik, Western nuclear reps pander to Slovak nationalism, promoting nuclear expansion as a means to Slovak independence (Slovakia imports 20 percent of its electricity). In Prague, lobbyists promise a nuclear deliverance from the deforestation wrought by acid rain and pollution in Bohemia.

The money spent on nuclear power would be far more wisely invested in energy efficiency.

On the lecture circuit in Hungary last winter, Edward Teller made a similar pitch, telling audiences that going nuclear will reduce the region's dependence on lignite, the soft brown coal that fuels industry, heats dwellings and fills city streets and village lanes with sulfurous fumes. Teller enjoys influence among Hungarian technocrats. While in Hungary, Teller collected at least two laurels, one each from the prestigious Hungarian Academy of Sciences and Budapest Technical University.

Teller's reception suggests that the nuclear press agentry plays well here. The industry can also hope to ride the coattails of a vast popular craving for Western consumer goods and, by association, the companies and technologies that make them available. But the nuclear lobby has more to lose than to gain from a discussion of its proposals. Accordingly, Western nuclear reps are quietly building alliances and cutting deals with local officials. The result is a dearth of solid information and publicity about the proposals. In Czechoslovakia, for example, "no one knows," says Mesik, "if [former Slovak Premier] Meciar actually signed a legal agreement with Siemens to build the Kecerovce plant." Lamenting the "continuous assault of the nuclear lobby" in Czechoslovakia, Mesik concedes, "I'm afraid the nuclear question will be open for a long time here."

As it is, the case the nuclear West is making is contrived and flawed. The industry claims a "Chernobyl-type" accident is an "impossibility" with Western-style reactors. But the industry isn't saying what sort of devastating accidents *are* possible. Certainly the experimental fission technologies proposed by the West add unknown dangers. An A.E.C.L. spokesperson claims nuclear power is an "inflation-resistant fuel source." In the United States, however, nuclear costs are among the most inflationary of all construction costs, which helps explain why nuclear technology remains an economic as well as an environmental liability, barely cost-competitive with other energy sources. Yet Czechoslovak and Hungarian officials, according to the Western firms, have expressed a "preference" for nuclear power over other energy sources.

According to Slavotinek, the money spent on nuclear power would be far more wisely and safely invested in energy efficiency. Czechoslovakia and Hungary's energy efficiency are among the worst in Europe, thanks to obsolete and inadequately designed technology as well as dependence on brown coal, which is far less efficient for heating than black coal and far more polluting. Energy efficiency, as Slavotinek points out, is not only the cheapest and least painful energy-conservation strategy, it also delivers immediate benefits. These include a reduction of the environmental and public health risks associated with fossil and nuclear fuels. In addition, money otherwise absorbed by large-scale energy construction could be spent on fossil-fuel pollution controls and on developing clean resources, such as small-scale hydroelectric power, which provided much of Slovakia's electricity before World War II.

There is also the issue of *what* to produce with nuclear energy. According to Mesik, the Mochovce nuclear power plant, when completed, would provide power mainly for a giant aluminum plant, one of Slovakia's worst polluters. The aluminum plant is a takeover target of a Norwegian firm that is seeking a guaranteed supply of electricity.

Sooner or later the nuclear initiatives must pass through the political gantlet of the region's potentially powerful environmental movement. In Hungary and Slovakia, environmentalists played important roles before and during the 1989-90 upheavals. In the thick of public protest against the Communist regimes, environmentalists organized effective, international opposition to energy projects such as the Gabcikovo-Nagymaros hydroelectric plants on the Danube. Among the first acts of the revolutions were proclamations to suspend or scrutinize nuclear power facilities in Poland and East Germany, as well as in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Since then the oppositional politics that provided the movement's edge and focus has receded. Many movement leaders now occupy party and government positions. And the new governments are behaving as if they were part of the ecological problem. Official support for environmental agendas lags well behind that for economic development. In Czechoslovakia, observes Hilary French in *State of the World 1991*, an economic plan presented in September 1990 excluded proposals from the Ministry of the Environment. And in the republic of Slovakia, completion of the thirteen-year-old Gabcikovo hydroelectric project, the historic enemy of the environmental movement here, now appears closer than ever. That's because Christian Democratic leader Jan Carnogursky succeeded Meciar as Slovakia's Premier. Jan's brother Ivan is the general director of Hydro-Stav, the prime contractor for the Gabcikovo project, as well as vice chair of the Slovak Parliament. However, this past July, environmentalists and people living near Gabcikovo joined with other groups to blockade the construction site.

In Czechoslovakia environmental politics is diffuse, as a result of the many problems created by decades of unrestrained development. Environmentalists restore historic urban cores,

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reconstruct water mills and make forays into organic farming. Over beer, a Slovak Green confided, "We are doing a thousand things, but nothing precisely." Opposition to nuclear power could rally the dispersed environmental politics here. Mesik says that a recent poll in Czechoslovakia showed that "there is a high percentage of people who are afraid of nuclear power. They are not clearly for or clearly against it. They are hesitating." In mid-June, Foltanyi and others convened the "Energy in Central and Eastern Europe" conference near Prague. Rejecting the "unacceptable costs and dangers imposed by nuclear power," the conference statement called for a moratorium on nuclear construction and endorsed energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy development. The gathering ended with a broad alliance of environmentalists in possession of a practical energy-policy alternative to the West's nuclear agenda.

It remains to be seen whether the region's environmentalists will also return to the oppositional politics that has served so well in the past. It may be the most effective way to challenge the policies of nuclear "preference" and to support environmental-movement alumni now in the government. If an alternative environmental politics re-emerges, it could be contagious. The impulse to burden Eastern Europe's ravaged ecology with additional nuclear endangerment may not be felt long or deeply by people expecting something essentially different from the status quo ante 1989. □

SAY IT AIN'T SO, JOE

DiMaggio's Streak Stricken?

GENE CASE

Roger Angell, poet laureate of baseball, calls it "the premier one-season offensive record in the game." Michael Seidel, author of *Streak: Joe DiMaggio and the Summer of '41*, calls it "a legendary sequence, perhaps the most admired sequence in sports history." The Arts & Entertainment Network, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the game that ended it, airs an hourlong documentary on its hero—surely the greatest fuss ever made over a walk, two groundouts and a double-play bouncer to short. *The New York Times* dusts off the box scores of these half-century-old baseball games for us and illuminates their highlights; it's like watching DiMaggio "by flashes of lightning." In short, the awe in which The DiMaggio Streak is held by the baseball community continues to grow. Why?

In baseball, one always begins with the numbers. From May 15 through July 16, 1941, over fifty-six consecutive games, Joseph Paul DiMaggio amassed fifty-six singles, sixteen doubles, four triples, fifteen home runs, twenty-one walks, two hit-by-pitched balls, fifty-six runs scored, fifty-five runs batted in—for a batting average of .408, a slugging average of .717 and an on-base average of .463.

As we shall see, none of these numbers are unprecedented. None are even rare. Every one has been bettered by large margins, over and over again, not only for fifty-six-game stretches but for whole seasons, for strings of seasons—even, in some cases, for entire careers. The rain-delay debates on the proposition, "Resolved, that nobody will ever exceed Joe DiMaggio's streak" would be better spent debating, "Resolved, that nobody should care." For what was going on here? Hits of DiMaggio's that could often have been put to more productive use a day earlier or a day later fell instead, with pointless regularity, one per game. During the fifty-six games, I count seven occasions when Joe came to the plate hitless in his last four at-bats, and two occasions when he was hitless in his last five. But in each case these "oh-fors" spanned two games instead of being confined to one. On that statistical anomaly rests "the premier one-season offensive record in the game"? That is like saying Leroy Neiman is a greater artist than Pablo Picasso because Leroy Neiman paints at least one picture every day. It is time to debunk The Streak.

Batting average is the usual measure of consistency. Opportunities seized (hits) are divided by opportunities presented (at-bats). Perfection is 1.000; perfect ineptitude is .000. DiMaggio hit .408 during his streak. For reference, assume Joe had maintained that pace throughout his 139-game season. That season would rank fifteenth in the history of baseball, his .40807 squeezing him a shoelace ahead of Joe Jackson's .40806 in 1911. *But*—that's a hypothetical year inserted among real years. To judge Joe fairly, we must look at comparable fifty-six-game stretches in other hitters' careers, and that is what you will find (courtesy of the fine library at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York) in Tables I, II and III.

In Table I are seven fifty-six-game bashes that humble Joe's .408. Babe Ruth's may be the most remarkable: If you throw in Babe's fifty-seven walks you get an on-base average of .578 compared with Joe's .463. Ty Cobb's stretch was business as usual for the game's greatest hitter. From 1911 through 1913, over a total of 408 games, Ty hit just that: .408. Rogers Hornsby, who hit .402 for 696 games over five seasons (now there's a *streak*), is fittingly at the top of the heap: His .480 tear is from his .424 year, the record in this century. One could

TABLE I

BATTING AVERAGE OVER FIFTY-SIX GAMES

Hitter	Dates	Average
Joe DiMaggio	May 15–July 16, 1941	.408
Rod Carew	April 24–June 29, 1977	.429
George Sisler	April 18–June 18, 1922	.443
Bill Terry	July 8–September 3, 1930	.449
Babe Ruth	July 2–September 1, 1923	.452
Ty Cobb	May 6–July 10, 1911	.455
George Brett	May 22–August 19, 1980	.465
Rogers Hornsby	July 11–September 10, 1924	.480

Gene Case, a New York writer, came all the way from his home in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1950 to see DiMaggio at Yankee Stadium. But Joe didn't play that day.

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have added forty more such stretches, among them Ted Williams's .412 over the same period of Joe D.'s streak, but let's call this matter settled and move on to home runs.

Table II is a shocker, because the first three names are the three, four and five hitters in the Yankees lineup during the same fifty-six games of 1941. Tommy Henrich and Charlie Keller both missed a couple of Joe's streak games; nevertheless, while Joe was noisily slamming fifteen homers, Tommy quietly hit fifteen and Charlie socked fourteen. In truth, fifteen home runs over fifty-six games is rather common. Ralph Kiner (admittedly one of the better long-ball smashers) *averaged* fifteen homers every fifty-six games over his entire eight-year career in Pittsburgh. Ruth, during his fifteen-year Yankees career, averaged eighteen homers per fifty-six games (I've not invited Babe to Table II; he'd crowd out everybody else).

Triples? Joe lashed just four during his streak—one for every fourteen games. That projects to a ten-triple year, no great shakes. Twenty-triple years were common among the Immortals; Cobb had four, Jackson three, Honus Wagner and Stan Musial two. Even the Babe chugged 'round to third sixteen times in 1921. In 1929 Pittsburgh's poisonous Waner boys, Paul and Lloyd, put together a brotherhood of thirty-five triples.

TABLE II

HOME RUNS IN FIFTY-SIX GAMES

Hitter	Dates	Home Runs
Tommy Henrich	May 15–July 16, 1941	15
Joe DiMaggio	May 15–July 16, 1941	15
Charlie Keller	May 15–July 16, 1941	14
Ted Williams	May 1–June 26, 1949	19
Kevin Mitchell	April 3–June 6, 1989	20
Cecil Fielder	April 9–June 8, 1990	22
Hack Wilson	July 24–September 20, 1930	23
Lou Gehrig	May 30–July 27, 1931	24

It is much the same story with doubles, the slugger's meat and potatoes. Joe hammered sixteen two-baggers during the streak, one for every fourteen at-bats, which works out to a forty-double year. Forty doubles gets you a piece of 348th place in the record book, but not a big piece: You're in a seventy-five-way tie.

The relative ordinariness of DiMaggio's extra-base-hit production during the streak is reflected in his .717 slugging average. (In a slugging average, doubles count two, triples three and home runs four; in a batting average, all hits are counted one.) Again, extrapolating from the streak to a whole season, DiMaggio's .717 would rank sixteenth in the record book. That's disappointing, because DiMaggio was always much more a slugger than a pure hitter: He ranks thirty-third in lifetime batting average but sixth in lifetime slugging. The boys ahead of him—Ruth, Williams, Gehrig, Jimmie Foxx and Hank Greenberg—are the kind of club you like to belong to (Hornsby is right behind). Joe's .717 during the streak is in a class with, say, Don Mattingly's fifty-six-game stretch throughout August and September of 1985—impressive, but not on a level with Hornsby's .814 streak in 1924 or Ruth's .874 streak in 1923.

Table III speaks for itself. Again, the streak is relatively ordinary. When we burrow into the box scores, we see why.

TABLE III

RUNS PRODUCED IN FIFTY-SIX GAMES

Hitter	Dates	Runs	RBIs	Runs Produced*
Joe DiMaggio	May 15–July 16, 1941	56	55	96
Rogers Hornsby	July 24–Sept. 17, 1929	60	65	106
Ted Williams	May 1–June 26, 1949	56	74	111
Lou Gehrig	May 30–July 27, 1931	69	76	121
Hack Wilson	July 24–Sept. 20, 1930	59	87	123
Hank Greenberg	May 18–July 14, 1935	54	84	128

*Runs scored added to runs batted in, minus the number of home runs, since homers are counted in both columns.

Extracting DiMaggio's batting line from the fifty-six box scores, one immediately notices that the "streak" was in fact four mini-streaks separated by weeklong doldrums or mini-slumps. The current form of the box score shows:

At-Bats	Runs	Hits	RBIs

Our average modern major leaguer usually performs like this:

4	0	1	0

getting a hit roughly every fourth time at bat. Now, from the great DiMaggio during his great streak we expect much more, as in this line from Game 12:

5	3	4	3

But to find such numbers you have to slog through swamps of one-for-fours. There are three one-for-twos, seven one-for-fives, eight one-for-threes and sixteen one-for-fours. Games 5 through 11 Joe hit .267. Beginning with Game 13, he went seven games without driving in a run. From Game 27 through 31 he hit .294, with just two RBIs (poor timing, because the Yankees lost Games 30 and 31, each by one run). At Game 45 he finally explodes and hits .529 for eight games, driving in twelve runs and fueling the last half of a fourteen-game Yankees winning streak. I want to return, however, to Game 38, when the streak should have been history.

It's hot in New York and so are the Yanks. They've won three in a row and scratched their way into first place. It's the bottom of the eighth and the Yankees hold an uneasy 3-1 lead over the St. Louis Browns. The fans are restless. Joe's streak is in trouble. Here is Arthur Daley in the *Times*:

> Joe had flied out in his first turn at bat, had been safe on a sharply hit grounder that the official scorer properly called an error and then had bounded out feebly in his third try. The crowd of 8,692 wondered if he would get a chance to bat again.
>
> DiMaggio was the fourth hitter in the eighth. Johnny Sturm popped up, but there was a roar of expectancy when Red Rolfe walked. Joe McCarthy [the Yankees manager] was taking no chances on Henrich slapping into a double play. In a nice gesture, he ordered Tommy to sacrifice. . . .

Nice, but strange. You rarely sacrifice with one out already, and almost never with your number-three hitter. Certainly McCarthy wants to win this game; first place is at stake. Certainly

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he wants the runner to score; a three-run lead is always better than a two-run lead. Anyway, Henrich drops a perfect bunt. Rolfe is now perched on second, DiMaggio is standing "nonchalantly" (Daley) at the plate, and the battle of managerial wits shifts to the Browns dugout and Luke Sewell, a rookie manager but an American League catcher with nineteen seasons behind him.

Imagine that you are Luke. What are you looking at? Your pitcher is Eldon Auker, a submarining right-hander. The hitter is Joe DiMaggio. On deck is Charlie Keller. First base is open.

If you walk DiMaggio, you would have a force-out at first, second and third, which is always nice. And you'd be pitching to Charlie Keller instead of Joe DiMaggio. Keller would come to the plate with two hits in his last thirteen at-bats (.153), with no RBIs over that stretch. He's been hitting right-handed pitching at a .239 clip. DiMaggio is .480 over his past six games; he's scorching right-handers at a .380 clip and he is positively feasting (.458) on Browns pitching.

You think about the last time Auker faced the Yankees. It was June 8, back in St. Louis. Keller managed a harmless single. DiMaggio clouted two home runs, driving in four runs.

You're on the mound now.

"First base is open, Skipper," says Auker.

You look up into the shadowed stadium. The bone-jarring pounding is starting to shake the porches. Rick Ferrell, your catcher, says, "This guy's going to swing at anything, Skipper." You nod. The greatest advantage any pitcher can have over any hitter is the knowledge that he will swing at anything.

"Eldon, if you come within a foot of the black, you'll finish the year pitching batting practice." You trot from the mound.

Auker is no slouch (he was 16-11 with a losing team last year), and he throws DiMaggio six unhittable pitches. Joe lashes at three of them—and misses. The streak is over and, more important, you are out of the inning.

The snarling Yankees take the field. The stands are howling for blood—your blood. You climb the dugout steps and take off your cap. They are throwing whole hot dogs swaddled in buns at you. You smile. You shake your head. If they could read your lips, what they would read is this:

"Sorry, boys. We're playing baseball."

But the Browns weren't playing baseball. That summit meeting never took place. Auker's first pitch to DiMaggio was nasty enough, low and inside, but it was a strike, and Joe laced it down the line and into the left-field corner for a double. Rolfe cruised home from second, and that's how it ended, 4-1, Yanks.

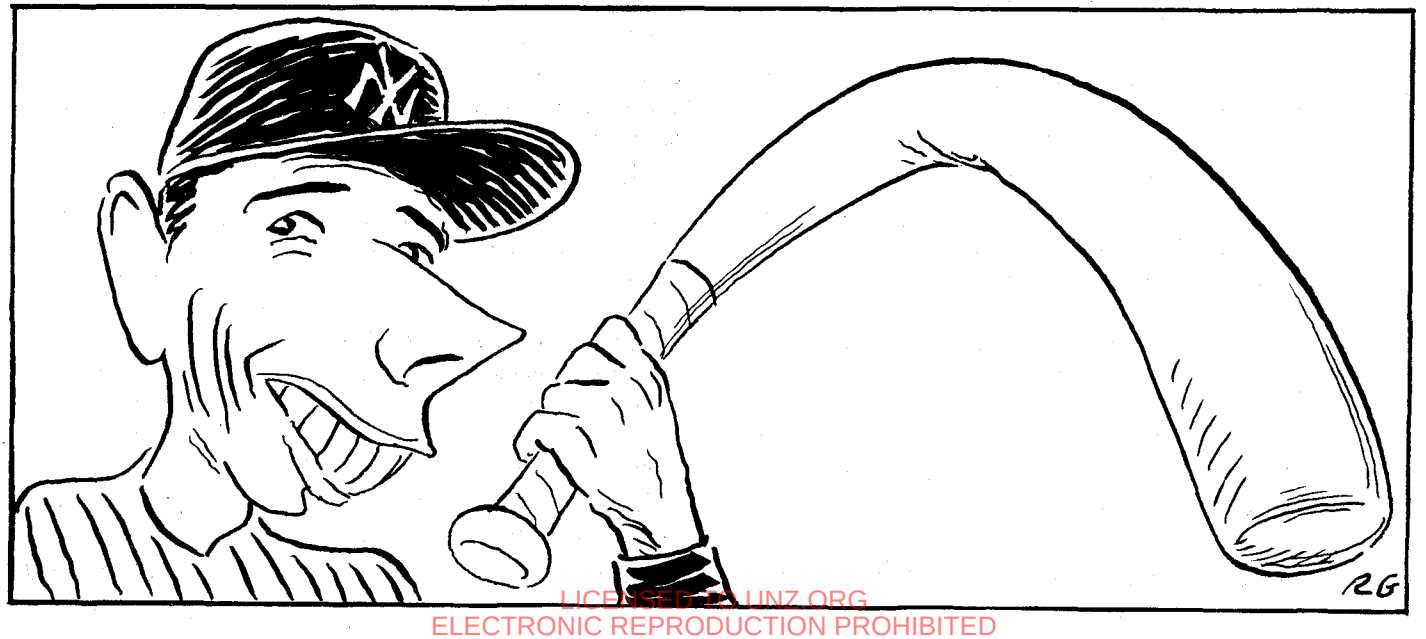
I cannot understand that decision. It seems to me that Sewell, Ferrell and Auker must have been streak-bit. It seems to me that a factor as foreign and as disturbing as a bookie's line had been introduced into the game's strategy. It seems to me that the Browns consented to play statball.

Statball is the substitution of personal agendas for the team agenda, which is to win baseball games. One felt it most strongly during Pete Rose's long march toward Ty Cobb's record of 4,191 lifetime hits. Rose, a sort of Saturday morning cartoon version of Cobb, simply would not sit down. Cobb hung up his notorious spikes at age 41, when his average dipped to a (for him) disreputable .323. But Pete Rose was still out there at age 45, his average plummeting (it was .219 before he gave up), penciling himself into the lineup (no one could stop him, he was the manager too), relentlessly hustling toward Cooperstown, finally knocking from the top of a column of statistics the name of the number-one batter of all time and replacing it with the name of the 121st-best batter of all time.

I hate the streak because it casts Joe DiMaggio as the hero of statball, and that's not the man I choose to remember. DiMaggio, after Babe Ruth, is the greatest celebrity baseball has produced, and he is one of the greatest players. Much of that greatness was defensive, and for that we have to rely on the oral testimony of witnesses. As others have noted, the famous "jump" Joe got on drives to his left or right leaves no statistical footprint, no footnote in the batter's line—

4	0	0*	0

*should have been a triple; robbed by DiMaggio.



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DiMaggio played for the most dominant team in memory. No team, of course, rests entirely on the skills of one player, but DiMaggio was the heart of the Yankees for thirteen seasons, during which the team went to the World Series ten times and won nine of them. One of those victorious Series was in '41, and a streak that I do admire took place in that Series—all in one game, all in one inning, all, in fact, between the second and third outs of one inning.

Game 4. Ninth inning. Brooklyn Dodgers are ahead 4-3 and about to even the series. Tommy Henrich strikes out and the game's over—but the Bums' catcher, Mickey Owen, lets the ball get by him and Henrich makes it to first base. The door is open a crack. But there is a huge difference between peeking through a door that is open a crack and crashing through a door that is open a crack.

Next hitter, Joe DiMaggio.

DiMaggio "whistled" (I still remember the verb, from the book about him that lay open on my bedside table when I was 10) a single to left. Keller doubled off the wall. Bill Dickey walked. Joe Gordon doubled. Final score: Yanks 7, Bums 4. That ain't statball. That's baseball. □

MAJORITY OF ONE

The Essential Mencken

In an irony he would have savored, H.L. Mencken, whose very career exemplifies democracy's answer to dogmatism, was a posthumous victim of the political-correctness police. After the publication of The Diary of H.L. Mencken *last year, he was hung as an anti-Semite and a racist. The reaction among journalists was to consign his works and reputation to a purificatory pyre. A past winner of the H.L. Mencken Award angrily handed it back, and his action was praised by* Columbia Journalism Review. *The National Press Club in Washington announced it would rename its Mencken Library. But Mencken found his defenders in reviewers who thought it incumbent upon them to check out what he had actually said. As Gore Vidal shows in the following article, which is excerpted from his introduction to* The Impossible H.L. Mencken, *to be published in November by Anchor/Doubleday, Mencken's best defense is his own words.* —*The Editors*

GORE VIDAL

After politics, journalism has always been the preferred career of the ambitious but lazy second-rater. American exceptions to mediocrity's leaden mean: From column A, there was Franklin D. Roosevelt. From column B, H.L. Mencken.

Although Henry Louis Mencken was a magazine editor (*The Smart Set*, *The American Mercury*), a literary critic, an expositor of Nietzsche and a school-of-Samuel-Johnson compiler of *The American Language*, he never ceased to be a journalist for the *Sunpapers* in his hometown of Baltimore, where he was born in 1880 and where he died in 1956. From 1906 to 1948 he was connected with the Baltimore *Sun* as a columnist, feature writer, editor. He was the most influential journalist of his day; he was also the wittiest.

As a working journalist, Mencken took as his lifelong subject nothing less than Freedom's land and Bravery's home, the (not so very) United States, where flourished such gorgeous clowns as Calvin Coolidge; "The Great Croon of Croons," Franklin D. Roosevelt; the not-so-great Great Commoner, William Jennings Bryan; and many, many others. But if only God could have invented such a cast, it was Mencken who proved to be God's most attentive and appreciative drama critic. It was Mencken who described the show. He reveled in absurdity; found no bonnet entirely bee-less. He loved the national bores for their own sweet sake.

As Mencken contemplated the meager lives of our dull Presidents, he wrote: "There comes a day of public ceremonial, and a chance to make a speech. . . . A million voters with IQs below 60 have their ears glued to the radio. It takes four days' hard work to concoct a speech without a sensible word in it. Next a dam must be opened somewhere. Four dry Senators get drunk and make a painful scene. The Presidential automobile runs over a dog. It rains."

Mencken's ideal popular paper for that vast public that "gets all its news by listening" (today one would change "listening" to "staring"—at television) would be "printed throughout, as First Readers are printed, in words of one syllable. It should avoid every idea that is beyond the understanding of a boy of ten" on the ground that "all ideas are beyond them. They can grasp only events." But they will heed only those events that are presented as drama in "the form of combat, and it must be a very simple combat, with one side clearly right and the other clearly wrong. They can no more imagine neutrality than they can imagine the fourth dimension." Thus Mencken anticipates not only the television news program but the television political campaign, with its combative thirty-second commercials and soundbites. Movies were already showing the way, and Mencken acknowledged the wisdom of the early movie magnates, whose simple-minded screened *agons* had made them rich. Unfortunately, once rich, they pined for culture, against which Mencken sternly warns with his famous injunction: "No one in this world, so far as I know—and I have researched the records for years, and employed agents to help me—has ever lost money by underestimating the intelligence of the great masses of the plain people. Nor has anyone ever lost public office thereby."

Today, Mencken's boisterous style and deadpan hyperboles are very difficult even for "educated" Americans to deal with, and are Sanskrit to the generality. Although every American has a sense of humor—it is his birthright and encoded somewhere in the Constitution—few Americans have ever been able to cope with wit or irony, and even the simplest jokes often cause unease, especially today when every phrase must be examined for covert sexism, racism, ageism.

American character (which does and does not exist) fascinated Mencken, who observed in 1918 that the universal image of Uncle Sam the money-grubber was mistaken. "The character that actually marks off the American is not money-hunger at all; it is what might be called, at the risk of misunderstand-

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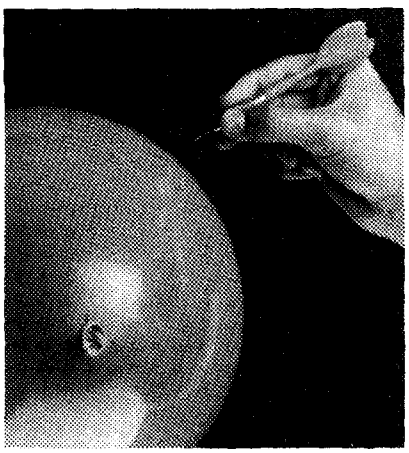

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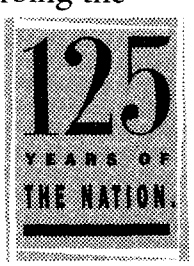

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ing, social aspiration." For the American, money plays only a part in moving upward "to break down some barrier of caste, to secure the acceptance of his betters. . . . Unlike Europe, no one has a station" [so far as he knows, of course: Class is the national dirty secret] "unless he makes it for himself." Of course, Mencken lived in simpler times. For the American of 1918 "there is always something just behind him and tantalizing him, menacing him and causing him to sweat."

Mencken quotes Wendell Phillips: "More than any other people, we Americans are afraid of one another." Mencken acknowledges this truth, and he puts it down to the desire to conform, which means howling with the rest of the mindless pack as it careens from nowhere to nowhere in pursuit of such instant enemies of the week as Qaddafi, Noriega and Saddam, who are put in place by our packmeisters, successively, like that mechanical rabbit used to keep racing dogs on course. For this sense of collective security, the individual must sacrifice himself "in order to belong to something larger and safer than he is," and he can "work off steam within prudent limits. Beyond lie the national taboos. Beyond lies true independence and the heavy penalties that go therewith."

Curiously enough, of all those good and bad Americans who shuddered at the sudden sharp wind from the east known as communism, Mencken, as early as 1930, figured that there was no way that communism could ever set up shop within our alabaster cities, much less take sickle to our fruited plains. Mencken's reasoning is exquisitely sound: "That Americans, in the mass, have anything properly described as keen wits is surely far from self-evident. On the contrary, it seems likely that, if anything, they lie below the civilized norm." Incidentally, for several decades I have been trying to convince Europeans that Americans are not innately stupid but merely ignorant and that with a proper educational system, et cetera. But the more one reads Mencken the more one eyes suspiciously the knuckles of his countrymen, looking to see calluses from too constant a contact with the greensward.

Mencken believes Americans to be more gullible than most people, dwelling as we do in "the home of freak economic schemes" (often, alas, contagious) and in "the happy hunting ground of the most blatant and absurd sort of charlatans in politics." From this intimate knowledge of the American "mind," Mencken thought that Americans, as lovers of "the bizarre and the irrational would embrace communism with joy, just as multitudes of them, in a previous age, embraced free silver. But, as everyone knows, they will have none of it." Mencken concedes the attraction of utopias to the foreign-born and educated Americans but "two-thirds of the native-born Communists that I have encountered are so plainly *mashuggah* that it would be flattery to call them stupid."

Mencken gives two reasons for the failure of communism/socialism to take root in the United States. The first is that Americans have long since been vaccinated by the likes of Bryan and Roosevelt (T.R.) against this sort of virus: In effect, the folks had been there before and they are aware of so "gross" a social and economic solution. Mencken's second reason strikes me as not only true but inspired. Americans were more sensitive to "the concrete debacle in Russia" because "they probably felt themselves, in a subtle and unconscious way, to be nearer to the Russians than any Europeans. Russia was not like Europe, but it was strangely like America. In the same way the Russians were like Americans. They, too, were naturally religious and confiding; they, too, were below the civilized average in intelligence; and they, too, believed in democracy, and were trying to give it a trial."

For Mencken, communist literature was "as childish as the literature of Christian Science," while communism itself "will probably disappear altogether when the Russian experiment comes to a climax, and Bolshevism either converts itself into a sickly imitation of capitalism or blows up with a bang. The former seems more likely." That is pretty good for 1930.

Currently, any use of the word "race" in the United States is considered a priori proof of the user's racism. Abstract nouns are now subject to close scrutiny to make sure that the noun's deployer is not a racist or sexist or ageist or bigot. Meanwhile, any word or phrase that might cause distress must undergo erasure, while euphemism (the "E" word—or is it the "U" or "Eu" word?) is the order of the day.

Mencken is a nice antidote. Politically, he is often right but seldom correct by today's stern standards. In a cheery way, he dislikes most minorities and if he ever had a good word to say about the majority of his countrymen, I have yet to come across it. Recently, when his diaries were published, it was discovered that He Did Not Like the Jews, and that he had said unpleasant things about them not only as individuals but In General, plainly the sign of a Hitler-Holocaust enthusiast. Even *The New York Review of Books*'s de-anti-Semitizer, Garry Wills, turned on him after so gloriously, if narrowly, saving Dickens from the fatal charge: Fagin is loathsome not, in Dickens's eyes, because he is a Jew but because he is, sickeningly, A Pederast. But in Mencken's private correspondence, he also snarls at black Americans, Asians, Britons, women and WASPs, particularly the clay-eating Appalachians, whom he regarded as subhuman [see Richard Lingeman, "Prejudices: Last Series," February 19, 1990]. But private irritability is of no consequence when compared with what really matters, public action.

Far from being an anti-Semite, Mencken was one of the first journalists to denounce the persecution of the Jews in Germany at a time when *The New York Times*, say, was, to put it mildly, reticent. On November 27, 1938, Mencken writes (Baltimore *Sun*), "It is to be hoped that the poor Jews now being robbed and mauled in Germany will not take too seriously the plans of various politicians to rescue them." He then reviews the various schemes to "rescue" the Jews from the Nazis, who had not yet announced their own final solution.

To the British proposal that the Jews be admitted to British Guiana, Teutonophile Mencken thinks that the *Ostjuden* might hack it there but not the German Jews, since "they constitute an undoubtedly superior group. . . . Try to imagine a German-Jewish lawyer or insurance man, or merchant, or schoolmaster [in] a place where the climate is that of a Turkish Bath." Tanganyika he thought marginally better but still pretty bad, at least "as good as the worst parts of Mexico." He then suggests that Canada could "absorb 100,000 or even 200,000 with ease, and they would be useful acquisitions,

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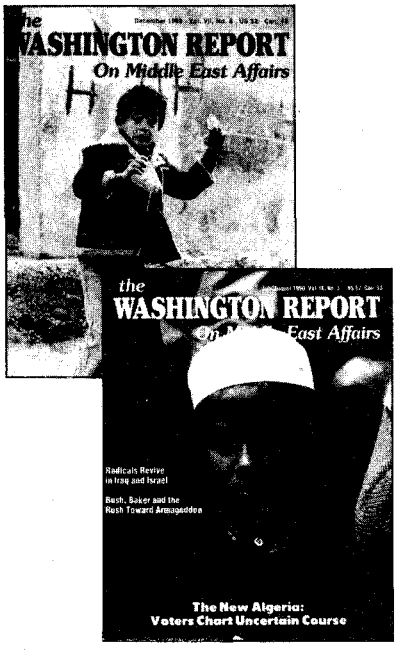
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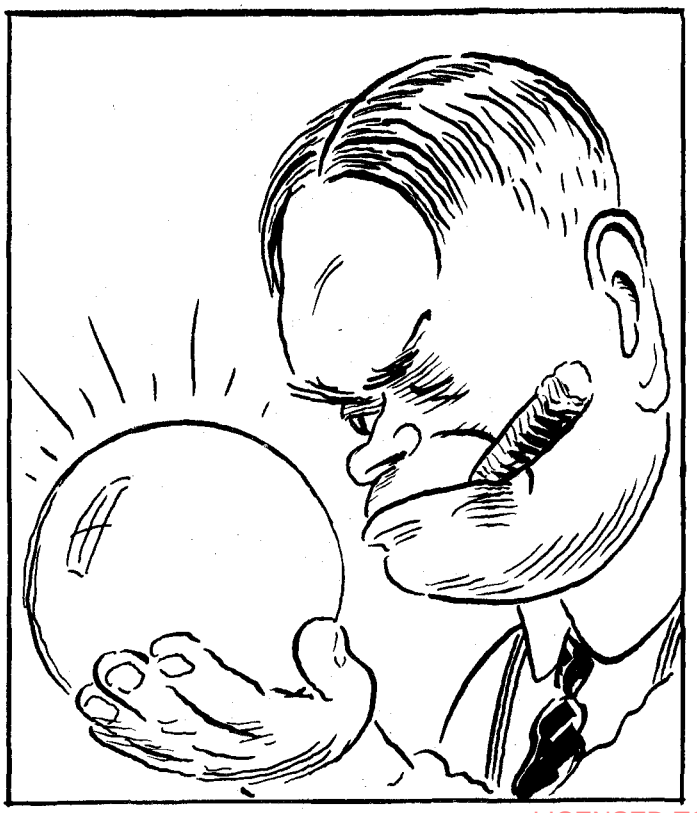
especially in the western prairie populations, which are dominated today by a low-grade of farmers, without any adequate counterbalance of a competent middle class." Today Mencken could not write this because the Farmers Anti-Defamation League of Saskatchewan would be offended, and his column banned in Canada. "Australia, now almost as exclusive as Sing Sing, which it somewhat resembles in population, could use quite as many [Jews] as Canada and New Zealand." The Australian government would, today, file a protest, and Mencken's column would be banned.

Then Mencken gets down to business: "The American plan for helping the refugees is less openly brutal than the British plan, but almost as insulting to them, and even more futile." After many official and unofficial condemnations of Germany, including "the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt's" declaration that "he could scarcely believe that such things could occur in a Twentieth Century civilization," the President is still not willing to relax the immigration laws or do anything "that might cause him political inconvenience." Mencken finds such "peck-sniffery . . . gross and disgusting . . . and I hope that American Jews . . . will not be fetched by it." Mencken also notes how the "Aframerican press" found amazing Roosevelt's solicitousness for German Jews so unlike his complaisance toward the ongoing crimes against black Americans.

Mencken concludes: "There is only one way to help the fugitives, and that is to find places for them in a country in which they can really live. Why shouldn't the United States take in a couple of hundred thousand of them, or even all of them?" He notes two popular objections. One, there is already a lot of unemployment in the United States, to which he responds that it is unlikely the Jewish immigrants will either loaf or be incompetent. Two, there is anti-Semitism of the sort then being fanned by the Ku Klux Klan but, as he observes, "not many Jews are likely to go to Mississippi or Arkansas."



I am certain that those who wish to will be able to find anti-Semitism in Mencken's proposal to admit all Jewish refugees. Certainly he *generalizes* about Jews (how does he know that they don't *all* want to go to Mississippi?). But then perhaps the whole message is code; certainly the remark about Jewish "efficiency" is a classic blood libel.

As of 1934, Mencken was moderately impressed by Eretz Israel and agreeably condescending to the Arabs, who "breed like flies but die in the same way." He was generally approving of the European Jewish settlers, though he predictably cast a cold eye on the collectivist farms and kibbutzim. Of one of them, he wrote presciently, "It was founded in 1921, and is still in the full flush of its first success. Will it last? Probably not. As soon as its present kindergartners grow up they will begin to marry outside, and then there will be quarrels over shares, and it will no doubt go the way of Brook Farm, Amana and all other predecessors." Mencken thought there was only a fifty-fifty chance of the Jewish plantation in Palestine enduring. "On the one hand [Eretz Israel] is being planted intelligently and shows every sign of developing in a healthy manner. But on the other hand there are the Arabs—and across the Jordan is a vast reservoir of them, all hungry, all full of enlightened self-interest. Let some catastrophe in world politics take the British cops away, and the Jews who now fatten on so many lovely farms will have to fight desperately for their property and their lives." The catastrophe came right on schedule in the form of Hitler and of such professional Jewish terrorists as Begin and Shamir.

One of the few groups that Americans are fairly free to denounce, after the Arabs, are the Japanese. Mencken was most alert to "the yellow peril." (I use quotes to forestall the usual letters accusing me of hating all Asians along with Mencken, when neither did—nor does.) In 1939 Mencken was thinking seriously about Japan. As there is no public memory in the United States, let me remind the reader that since the Japanese victory over Russia in 1905, the United States had been preparing for a war with Japan in order to establish who would be *numero uno* not only in the Pacific but in Asia. By 1939 Japan was busy conquering China, having acquired Korea and Manchuria, and the Nippon Imperial eye was set on the Southeast Asian oilfields, at that time in the hands of two local Asiatic powers, the British and the Dutch.

As a "racist," Mencken blithely generalized about race, a real no-no in today's world, where each and every one of the 5 billion people on our common crowded planet is a treasured and unique creation, sharing nothing at all with anyone else except maybe the Big Fella—sorry, Big Gal—in the Sky. But generalize he did, something no longer allowed in freedom's land. Mencken writes: "The Japanese, judged by Western eyes, are an extremely homely people, and no doubt the fact has a good deal to do with their general unpopularity." Mencken thought that they look both "sinister and ludicrous," not an encouraging or likable combination. "They look, taking one with another, like Boy Scouts with buck teeth, wearing horn-rimmed spectacles. . . . I have never met a Caucasian who professed any affection for the Japs, though there are not a few white fans for the scenery," etc. Already guilty of Rac-

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ist Generalizing, Mencken proceeds, sickeningly, to grade *all* Japanese: "They are a people of very considerable talents, and will have to be reckoned with in the future history of the human race. They have long since got past the stage of sitting respectfully at the feet of the West. . . . In all the fields of human endeavor save theology, politics and swine justice they are showing the way to their ofay mentors. They have made important and durable contributions to knowledge in each and every one of the exact sciences, and they have taken such a lead in trade and industry that the only way left to beat them is to murder them." But even this solution, particularly favored by England, won't be easy because they have "a considerable knack for war."

As "nearly all white men dislike the Japs and like the Chinese," Mencken tried to give an accurate impression of our soon-to-be great adversary and, as I gaze out over the Hollywood hills toward Japanese Universal Pictures, our eventual conquerors. But accuracy in reporting on Pacific matters is always difficult because the American press has always given us a view of the Japanese that "is seldom accurate and not always honest," to say the least. As of 1939 China and Chiang Kai-shek were, as always, on the brink of victory but, somehow, Japan always won and, as Mencken remarked, "The Japs, in truth, had as sound a mandate to clean up China as the United States have had to clean up Cuba." Or Mexico, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada and Panama, not to mention Korea, Cambodia, Iran and Iraq.

Two years later the Japs, heavily provoked, sank the American fleet at Pearl Harbor and the great race war was on with Round One (military) going to the white race (1945) and Round Two (economic) going to the yellow race (1990). Mencken was particularly good—that is, prophetic—on American skulduggeries south of the border, where he often visited and duly noted our eerie inability to do anything honest or even intelligent, whether in Cuba or Haiti or in dealing with Nicaragua's Sandino.

Matthew Arnold wrote that a "style is the saying in the best way *what you have to say.* The *what you have to say* depends on your age." Mencken certainly said what he had to say about the age that he had been assigned to. When asked why, if he could find nothing to "revere" in the United States, he lived there, he replied, "Why do men go to zoos?"

Religion, as generally practiced by the Americans of his day, he saw as a Great Wall of China designed to keep civilization out while barbarism might flourish within the gates. He himself was a resolute breacher of the Great Wall, and to the extent that some civilization has got through, he is one of the few Americans we can thank. Plainly, so clear and hard a writer would not be allowed in the mainstream press of today, and those who think that they would like him back would be the first to censor and censure him.

As for Mencken himself, he wrote his own epitaph in 1921 for *The Smart Set*: "If, after I depart this vale, you ever remember me and have thought to please my ghost, forgive some sinner and wink your eye at some homely girl." I realize that he has, viciously, used the "G" word and, even worse, the long-since banned "H" word. But there he is. And here we are, lucky we. □

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Robert Sherrill tells the sordid story of the looting decade. It's a feisty account that shows how the S&L crisis was created, how the taxpayers were betrayed by their elected officials and government regulators, who the chief scoundrels are and why the current bailout is a disaster. Most important, Sherrill warns that the Feds, in willful ignorance of the lessons of the S&L disaster, are moving rapidly toward further deregulation of the big banks—a move that could lead to even greater financial disaster. This issue's importance is intensified by today's headlines. *(November 19, 1990)*

The American Neo-Nazi Movement Today

Elinor Langer's well-researched and chilling look at the growth of skinhead, neo-Nazi and white supremacist hate groups with direct ideological links to the original Nazi movement. Langer concludes that something deeply disturbing is indeed happening here—something every American should comprehend and confront. *(July 16/23, 1990)*

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The Nation's special Earth Day 1990 issue features bold articles by Barry Commoner and Kirkpatrick Sale outlining down-to-earth technological and political strategies for preserving the planet. Commoner argues that government regulation has failed to persuade American corporations to clean up their act, and Sale argues that Earth Day 1990 commemorated the problem, not the solution. "To succeed," according to the issue's lead editorial, "environmental politics needs a movement." The solutions offered here are radical, but so is the problem. *(April 30, 1990)*

'Fetal Rights'—A New Assault on Feminism

Katha Pollitt focuses on the anti-choice forces' new strategy: persecuting women who carry or give birth to drug dependent or alcoholic children. Pollitt tells how mothers are being portrayed as "the major threat to unborn babies." Already in wide demand for college textbooks and academic courses in many disciplines. *(March 26, 1990)*

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Guest-edited and written by African-American women, this important *Nation* issue debunks the myths and exposes the reality of the black family. Margaret B. Wilkerson, Jewell Handy Gresham, Faye Wattleton and others. With a final appeal/challenge to America by speaker, activist and author Ossie Davis. This issue has received widespread attention in academic circles and was nominated for a National Magazine Award. *(July 24/31, 1989)*

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Mergers and takeovers are transforming the information business, creating companies worth billions of dollars and concentrating power and ownership in the hands of a few. Ben H. Bagdikian, author of *The Media Monopoly*, examines the growth of these giant communication combines, and profiles such media barons as Rupert Murdoch and Robert Maxwell. This special issue is essential to all students of the media, in or out of the classroom. *(June 12, 1989)*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A Soup of Wild Herbs

LILLIAN S. ROBINSON

A LIFE OF HER OWN: A Countrywoman in Twentieth-Century France. *By Émilie Carles, as told to Robert Destanque. Translated with an introduction and afterword by Avriel H. Goldberger. Rutgers. 271 pp. $19.95.*

A WOMAN'S STORY. *By Annie Erneaux. Translated by Tanya Leslie. Four Walls, Eight Windows. 92 pp. $15.95.*

In the summer of 1978 I was living in a small Burgundian village called Dracy-sur-Ouanne. Although my life seemed full of promise—I was in a new country with a newborn at my breast and my first book about to appear—I moved about in a slow haze, had trouble getting the next book started and spent my time reading the autobiography of an elderly rural activist. *Une soupe aux herbes sauvages*, which was a best seller in France that year, provided me with access to the peasant life surrounding me but also pointed out possibilities within myself. I thought other American feminists might be as moved by Émilie Carles's story as I was and, one dreamy afternoon, I decided to translate it.

So start with the title. *Une soupe aux herbes sauvages*: A Soup of Wild Herbs. Or should it be *Wild Herb Soup*? Maybe *A Soup of Wild Grasses* would be more lyrical, but then the book is so down-to-earth. Besides, most Americans aren't familiar with that kind of soup; they won't understand. Bogged down at the outset, I abandoned the project. Now my son is 13 and it has taken this long for someone to bring out an English version. Avriel Goldberger's translation effaces the botanical nuances that troubled me, substituting *A Life of Her Own*.

A Life of Her Own! Now why didn't I think of that? Maybe because it's wrong. It sends a false message, suggesting a feminism based in independence and individualism, whereas Carles's politics are deeply rooted in a sense of community. Her commitments to pacifism and anarchism resonate with her sense of class and region, which is to say that her vision of the revolutionary changes that are needed comes from her experience within a powerful tradition. And her engagement with the "new," post-1968 issues of feminism and ecology is similarly informed by her involvement with movements as old as this century.

Carles is telling a story that is simultaneously literature and a critique of 'the harshest place on earth.'

None of this is to say that Émilie Carles, until her death in 1979, was not an extraordinary individual. She was. Coming from a background that was as narrowly restricted in economic and cultural terms as it was in its geographical boundaries, she broke away from the limitations of her environment without ever breaking with the environment itself. Obtaining an education despite her family's incomprehension and resentment, she chose to return to her native mountains as a village teacher. Her work with peasant children, her egalitarian marriage, her struggles against militarism and injustice all took place on her native soil or something very close to it, among people she loved and identified with.

Nor do I mean to detract from Carles's feminism by pointing out that "a life of one's own," in the sense in which she uses it, means an autonomous identity *in addition to*, rather than instead of, her responsibilities to her widowed father, her sisters and brothers, and their peasant household. On the level of theory, Carles was a feminist because she resisted all forms of domination and understood their social origins and interrelations. But it was her lived experience that determined the *kind* of feminist she was, enraged from her earliest years at the violence and abuse suffered by the women around her, women like her own sister, who were battered by drunken, embittered husbands, who were forced into repeated childbearing by government pronatalism and brutal mates, who were driven to literal insanity by the conditions of their marriages. And she is most convincing when she connects her larger sense of the nature of all oppression with the particulars of lives whose protagonists were denied that understanding of where the oppression came from and what it meant.

When Carles explains methods of winter storage and preparation of sausages and coarse bread; or when she relates the wolf-tales peasants told one another at nighttime gatherings in the stables; or even when she asserts that her home, the Clarée Valley in the High Alps, is the most beautiful place on earth, she is simultaneously telling a story that has the appeal of literature and laying the groundwork for our comprehension of a culture that she also characterizes as having been, in her childhood, "the harshest place on earth." Relations between the sexes and, even more starkly perhaps, between children and adults, were shaped by this culture. Carles's grasp of those relations, the ethos of communal survival in which the death of one child, however cherished, "didn't amount to much," underlies her bone-deep resistance to militarism and fascism. Regional feeling is also built into the political activism that made Carles famous, her leadership in the 1970s of a peasant movement to prevent the construction of a superhighway through the Clarée Valley. The book's section of photographs includes one of Carles, at the age of 75, riding a tractor in the forefront of a demonstration through the streets of Briançon.

Goldberger's introduction emphasizes the contradictions entailed in Carles's role as a village schoolteacher. On the one hand, the teacher was an agent of enlightenment; whereas the words "compulsory education," in English, stir little excitement in our breasts, virtually any French person can cite the terms of the Jules Ferry Law that made schooling in France "free, mandatory, and secular." On the other hand, the teacher was an agent of a national government that, through all its twentieth-century vicissitudes, was chauvinist, militarist and imperial. In this environment, Carles represented not only the expected republican modernity but ongoing revolution, as she

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quietly taught her pupils to challenge nationalism, militarism and colonialism.

In a sense, Carles was isolated in her one-room schoolhouse, but the instruction she provided was infused with her understanding of the connections between her classroom and the wide world. And she was not really alone. The most impressive nonviolent movement in France at the time I was reading *Une soupe aux herbes sauvages* was the struggle of the peasants of Larzac against attempts to expand military facilities onto their sheep-grazing lands. They opposed the tanks in the name of the land itself, and, as one element of the resistance, a number of men of all ages, supposedly hidebound conservatives who had unquestioningly and even proudly done their military service, returned their *livrets militaires* to the Defense Ministry. (Structurally, this act was like an American's sending back or burning a draft card, but its emotional force was more like that of the Vietnam vets throwing their medals over the police barricades onto the Capitol grounds.) A couple of years later it was Larzac peasants who welcomed and expressed solidarity with leaders of the indigenous resistance to French rule in New Caledonia.

Nor was Carles alone in her political commitments outside the classroom. In one sense, she and her husband were indeed oddballs in their narrow-minded village, but in another sense they were always part of a broad movement or series of movements. The two worlds, the strictly local and the national or international, come together in concrete terms when Carles describes the simple, hearty dinner she served to a poor man from the city running as a left-wing candidate for office and the man's amazement at the unaccustomed luxury of such a meal; or when she tells of the communal inn that she and her husband ran during the Popular Front period, sometimes at a loss, for working people enjoying the first paid vacations of their lives; or when she explains how her husband, pursued by the collaborators and hanging out with the *maquis* during World War II, nonetheless refused on longstanding pacifist principle to carry a rifle.

The afterword brings Carles's story up to 1990, when Bernard Pivot showed clips of his favorite interviews with authors during the fifteen years of his immensely popular literary talk show, and one of them was Émilie Carles: "*C'était une sacrée bonne femme!*" Goldberger translates this epithet as "one hell of a woman," which brings me back to where I started, to problems of translation. The unqualified admiration reflected in "one hell of a woman" does not suggest the distinctions of class, gender and age and the (at least) mixed emotions implied by Pivot's comment in French. Yet in a country whose own radical tradition includes a woman labor organizer who told workers to "pray for the dead, fight like hell for the living" and a woman rural agitator who said American farmers should "raise less corn and more hell," the translation is both apt and powerful.

It is only in a context defined by this "hell of a woman" that *A Woman's Story* appears less compelling. Annie Erneaux's memoir of her mother is another French book dealing with female life, class, aging and death, and it certainly makes sense to review it along with *A Life of Her Own*. But I wouldn't recommend that anyone not facing a deadline read them in the same week. For Erneaux's text draws its strength from a different, more intimate place and creates its moving effects in another register.

Erneaux was raised as the only child of a working-class Norman couple who became small shopkeepers. Her parents, both from the rural proletariat, met at the rope factory where they were employed and saved every sou until they were able to buy a small general store and cafe. For the mother, upward mobility meant this step up to the lowest level of the merchant class. Her aspirations for her daughter, however, were more complicated. She wanted her to climb much further up the social ladder, and she understood that education was the means of ascent. But Erneaux's mother was alienated almost by definition from the university-trained teacher and writer that education produced. *A Woman's Story* is an account of their separation, told from the daughter's perspective and written in the months immediately following her mother's death.

In the penultimate paragraph, Erneaux reflects—by no means for the first time in this slim volume—on the nature and purpose of her project:

> Naturally, this isn't a biography, neither is it a novel, maybe a cross between literature, sociology and history. It was only when my mother—born in an oppressed world from which she wanted to escape—became history that I started to feel less alone and out of place in a world ruled by words and

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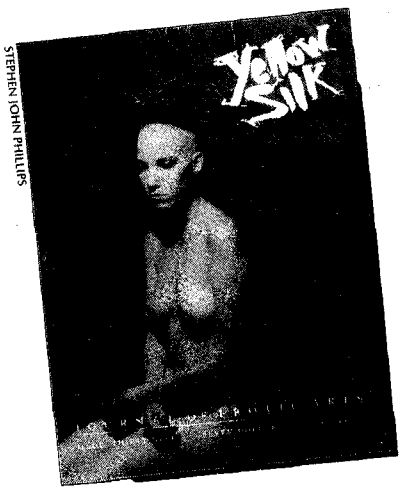

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ideas, the world where she had wanted me to live.

This reference to her own ambivalence in the social and intellectual milieu to which she has risen is surprising, for throughout most of her text, Erneaux, although consciously self-indulgent in writing it at all, concentrates on her mother's alienation from a world in which her daughter seems (and seems to feel) entirely at home. Earlier, Erneaux points out that her romantic adolescent rebellion was itself an expression of privilege, whereas for her mother, "rebellion meant only one thing—the denial of poverty—and called for only one possible course of action: get a job, earn money and work one's way up the social ladder."

It is Erneaux's attention to and respect for her mother's perplexity in the world of "culture" that makes the project unique. Women from working-class backgrounds like Erneaux herself, writers of what Tillie Olsen calls "the first generation," are beginning to be heard. But what of their—and our—mothers? Erneaux does not attempt to put words into her mother's mouth and tell her full story but rather to use the medium of literary language to show why her mother could never tell her own story.

The last part of this brief chronicle deals with the mother's physical and mental decline and her death. Alzheimer's disease becomes at once a metaphor for the dying woman's relation to the world of words and recorded memory and an all-too-concrete set of final conditions. Without ever shifting out of the personal tone, Erneaux manages to say something about the social construction of aging—in general and for women—just as she succeeded earlier in saying something about class and its functioning while talking about one woman.

Toward the end of the book, Erneaux remarks without elaboration that her mother died eight days before Simone de Beauvoir. I had been constantly reminded, while reading, of de Beauvoir's memoir of her own mother's death, so had been thinking of her in her identity as another undutiful writing daughter, not as the mother of us all. In contrast to the life that ended a week earlier, de Beauvoir's was one in which words and ideas and social action all had their place. Evocation of her name, like the comparison with *A Life of Her Own*, reminds us that for a woman, to be free to write and to take social action and thereby give meaning to her existence is a rare and incomparable privilege. □

L'Ottimo Artista

JOHN SHEPLEY

THE POETRY OF MICHELANGELO: An Annotated Translation. *By James M. Saslow. Yale University Press. 559 pp. $45.*

Michelangelo's poetry has always aroused a certain unease, compounded by misunderstanding, misrepresentation and denial. If the poems are a key to his art and life, they have nevertheless been an awkward, not to say inconvenient, one. Michelangelo's standing is unassailable as a visual artist and architect, but when he brings the same high seriousness and narrowness of focus, along with a strong mixture of Neoplatonic idealism and Christian guilt, to his writing, many critics and biographers would rather look the other way.

It is understandable that Michelangelo's grandnephew, as guardian of his uncle's reputation, should tamper with the gender of the persons to whom some of the poems were addressed—that, after all, is the way families operate. But it is odd, to say the least, that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in translating the sonnet "Quand'el ministro de' sospir mie tanti," which mourns the death of an unknown male friend, and as noted by James Saslow probably dates from the late 1520s, should "reassign" it, wittingly or not, to the noblewoman Vittoria Colonna, who died in 1547. And it is unfortunate that John Addington Symonds, who labored so bravely to restore the spirit and truth of the poems, should fall victim to the poetic clichés of his own century in translating them. Here is one of the terza-rima stanzas written by Michelangelo on his father's death:

> Tu se' del morir morto e fatto divo,
> né tem'or più cangiar vita né voglia,
> che quasi senza invidia non lo scrivo.

In Saslow's straightforward version:

> Now you are dead to death and made divine,
> and no longer fear a change of life or desire,
> which I can scarcely write without envy.

But Symonds:

> Thou'art dead of dying, and art made divine;
> Nor need'st thou fear to change or life or will;
> Wherefore my soul well-nigh doth envy thine.

The gap between that envious soul suspended somewhere in the empyrean and the earthbound writer holding his quill was produced in the nineteenth century.

But it is astonishing that in our own times the same critical discomfort persists. Creighton Gilbert's translations, first published in 1963 and reissued in 1980, which seem to be the ones most often quoted in recent art-historical and biographical texts, are a case in point. While Gilbert has the pronouns right, he still takes pains to deny in his foreword that Michelangelo meant what he said. It is not just that Gilbert confuses Platonic love, psychologically homoerotic as expounded in the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, with the medieval concept of courtly love for an inaccessible woman—the distinction had already been blurred in the Renaissance by Marsilio Ficino—but he sees Michelangelo's Platonic love as "an agonized defense against the temptations of women," noting "as a curious corollary" that "when speaking of a completely spiritual woman like Vittoria Colonna he quite naturally refers to her in the masculine gender." He warns against judging the writer's personality on the basis of a "single poem taken in isolation," and then proceeds to take at face value the artist's disclaimer, in a single poem, of carnal desire in his love for Tommaso de' Cavalieri. "The frustrating difficulty," he writes, "of reaching spiritual calm through excitement over beautiful women can be circumvented in one way. That is by loving a man, since sexual excitement is there not involved."

The logic of all this might amuse Michelangelo himself, whose grim, ironic sense of humor is well documented. Certainly the artist would have had occasion, given the atmosphere of hostility and professional jealousy in which he often had to work, to deny the nature of his feelings, at times even to himself. The visual evidence—his almost exclusive preoccupation with the male nude—should be enough to show the direction in which his libido flowed. And let us also not forget that in the growing repression of the Counter-Reformation, the church stood ready to enforce the death penalty for ho-

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John Shepley is a writer and translator living in New York City. His translation of Alberto Savinio's Tragedy of Childhood *will be published shortly by the Marlboro Press.*

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mosexuality. Whether an artist of Michelangelo's standing, working on papal commissions, was in any mortal danger we cannot know, but the threat was always there, internalized as well.

These issues are amply treated, and I would say resolved, in the introduction and notes to James Saslow's translations. *The Poetry of Michelangelo* is an impressive piece of scholarship, and it is hard to imagine it ever being supplanted. In addition to bilingual texts of the poems, it gives the location of originals (Michelangelo often wrote on the backs of letters or on sheets with drawings) and provides clarifications and alternate readings of obscure passages, a concordance to other editions and translations of the poems, a bibliography and a selection of relevant illustrations drawn from the artist's works. Saslow, who teaches art history at Queens College and is active in gay and lesbian studies, is the author of *Ganymede in the Renaissance: Homosexuality in Art and Society* (1986), which traces the allegorical treatment in art of the mythological episode of Zeus's abduction of Ganymede (a theme used by Michelangelo himself in his courtship of Cavalieri), and this book comes as a natural outgrowth and sequel to that previous volume.

The artist's work, of course, is what stands—ultimately of more importance (for us, if not for Michelangelo) than whether his passion for Tommaso de' Cavalieri was ever consummated or Vittoria Colonna was the only woman in his life. As a translator, Saslow has concentrated on the content of the poems and, wisely I think, eschewed rhyme and the formal metrical devices of Italian verse, relying on the English iambic foot in an effort at "clarity, directness, and passionate sincerity over arbitrary complexity and impersonal formalism." In a language so poor in rhyme as English, to try to reproduce the effects of the Italian rhyme scheme is to impose an artificial framework where the meaning is already concealed and elusive enough; even the use of assonance (as in the Gilbert translations) can be little more than a halfway measure, literally lip service to rhyme, which does nothing to convey the inevitability of the original. In a sense, Saslow has freed the poems, stripped them of what in English becomes their *superchio*, their excess, and the beneficiary of this direct approach is Michelangelo himself. The result is moving and in no way a betrayal.

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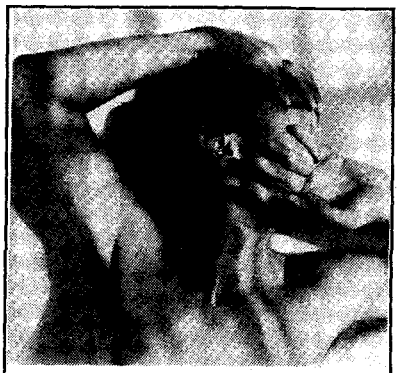

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Thus begins Michelangelo's best-known sonnet; addressed to Vittoria Colonna, it is the most celebrated expression of his own idea of his art. "Not even the best of artists has any conception/that a single marble block does not contain. . . ." Though admittedly a conceit, it remains a useful illusion (and perhaps Michelangelo saw it as such), a good working hypothesis, one of those as-if propositions that if not true would need to be invented if the sculptor (or the translator, for that matter) is to get on with his job. Incidentally, though the opening lines are all too familiar, the ending of the sonnet may come as a surprise. The artistic metaphor is dropped, and what the poet, confessing his want of skill, draws forth from the heart of the beloved is death.

Can we then respond to Michelangelo's poetry directly, beyond a mere interest in historical documentation or personal anecdote? Many have seen it as exploiting, more or less successfully, the tradition of Petrarch, and so bound to its conventions as to be inaccessible to a modern audience. Symonds, on the other hand, while admiring the poems for the "rugged elevation of their thoughts," found them alien to the cinquecento both in form and spirit—and, in a word, "uncouth." These are the thickets through which readers must find their own path, but it is well to remember that what later generations have seen fit to dismiss as Neoplatonic conceits were for the poet himself hard-won spiritual truths. Perhaps he has had to wait for our own uncouth times and these forthright translations for their essence to emerge in English. □

Postcards From America

DAVID FINKLE

CLOSE TO THE KNIVES: A Memoir of Disintegration. *By David Wojnarowicz. Vintage. 276 pp. $11.*

When David Wojnarowicz was a kid, a neighborhood bully caught him playing in a house under construction and forced him into the unfinished attic. Wojnarowicz had to tie the older boy up and masturbate him, which he did mechanically for a while until, wondering how to handle the onset of boredom, he spotted some insulating material nearby and began to use that. The bully's screams scared Wojnarowicz home, where later there was a phone call and the story came out. His father stripped him, beat him and, as Wojnarowicz recalls, "At some point he took out his dick. I remember it was half-hard. He told me to play with it and when I refused he beat me some more."

This scene is included in *Close to the Knives: A Memoir of Disintegration*, Wojnarowicz's collection of harsh, dreamy autobiographical writings and angry, reductive political essays, in which he also reveals that "I have always been attracted to dangerous men, men whose gestures intimated the possibilities of violence, and I have always seduced them into states of gentle grace with my hands and lips. I have loved the sweetness of their blushing long after our body fluids stopped their arcing motions and settled onto the sheets; the sweet flush of their embarrassment at the realization of the tenderness of their momentary gestures."

Much could be said of the connection between Wojnarowicz's childhood incest-and-abuse incident and his romantic, sexually compulsive hunger for threatening men, implying, as it does, a need to undo his father's cruelty by taming surrogates through adroit sexual ministrations. But Wojnarowicz—whose history includes being abandoned at one time or another by both parents, preadolescent prostitution, drugs and an AIDS diagnosis—is too infuriated, desolated and frustrated to spend time in self-analysis. Rather he is, and has been for some time, using everything in his arsenal to strike back at a society in which so much has been allowed to happen to him and to others like him.

Wojnarowicz has a lot in that arsenal. Since the early '80s he's been to the art community what, more recently, ACT UP has been to the streets. He's been whatever it took to get attention: a polemicist, a performance artist and a photographer and painter acclaimed for surrealistic mélanges of barren industrial landscapes, homosexual love, prehistoric animals, outsized phallic flowers, skeletons, corpses and an arachnid with Jesse Helms's head. In the essay "Do Not Doubt the Dangerousness of the 12-Inch Politician," he explains, "As an adult, I realize that if I make something and leave

David Finkle, a freelance writer based in New York City, writes about the arts.

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it in public for any period of time, I can create an environment where that object or writing acts as a magnet and draws others with a similar frame of reference out of silence or invisibility. Or that object or piece of writing can give me comfort as well as others. To place an object or writing that contains what is invisible because of legislation or social taboo into an environment outside myself makes me feel not so alone."

Visibility has cost him. The National Endowment for the Arts attacked by withdrawing a grant to Artists Space, the Manhattan gallery, because the Wojnarowicz essay "Postcards From America, X Rays From Hell" (included in this collection) accompanied its show "WITNESS: Against Our Vanishing." The Rev. Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association appropriated images from the catalogue for Wojnarowicz's "Tongues of Flame" exhibit for out-of-context use in the campaign to persuade Congress to hold back N.E.A. grants (Wojnarowicz sued and won, although he was only awarded one dollar in damages). Wojnarowicz has also suffered in his private life—losing, among many others, his onetime lover and best friend, photographer Peter Hujar, to AIDS in 1987.

But the more Wojnarowicz is assailed, the more he retaliates in his writing and in his painting and photography. Indeed, he often overlays his writings on the photographs and paintings in such a way that reading *Close to the Knives* is reading the unabridged version of the art; viewing it is seeing the illustrated edition of the writings. In appreciation of his multimedia bent, senior art critic Michael Kimmelman wrote in *The New York Times*, "Mr. Wojnarowicz's efforts demand to be considered together, for only in this way can the themes that link them emerge."

Wojnarowicz's attacks on politics and politicians everywhere in his furious output are as rude as he evidently thinks the occasion demands—John Cardinal O'Connor is "this fat cannibal from that house of walking swastikas up on fifth avenue"; Jesse Helms is "the repulsive senator from zombieland." He's so disturbed by what he calls "the sense of death in the American landscape" that he frequently won't honor America or the United States by capitalizing first letters, nor will he capitalize states like Arizona, to which he takes one of the trips that render the early chapters in *Close to the Knives* a Kerouac-like road update.

He's so rattled by the despair that once

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compelled him to photograph himself in rundown Manhattan surroundings wearing an Arthur Rimbaud mask (the "Rimbaud in New York" series) that he often does get carried away. For instance, he doesn't question the paranoia quotient in an outpouring such as, "We are born into a preinvented existence within a tribal nation of zombies and in that illusion of a one-tribe nation there are real tribes. Some of the tribes are in the business of sucker-punching people's psyches in the form of maintaining the day-to-day job of government—they sell the masses a pile of green-tainted meat; i.e., a . . . corrupted false future, and although that meat stinks of rot and pus and blood, this particular tribe extols these foul emissions as if they were virtues made of glorious sensitivities: 'Raise Old Glory while we do it to them again. . . .'"

Tirades like the above, grammatical lapses and some of Wojnarowicz's prettier recollections of sex with "shy" men who smoke cigarettes and exhale glamorously are outweighed by much unsentimental reporting. In the essay called "Living Close to the Knives" he bleakly recalls a trip he made with the dying Hujar to a Long Island quack who claimed he could cure AIDS with typhoid shots.

Wojnarowicz's sincerity, achievements and importance to the expanding homosexual and AIDS library shelf are clinched with this kind of breathless, heartfelt outburst: "Outside my window there are thousands of people without homes who are trying to deal with having AIDS. If I think *my* life at times has a nightmarish quality about it because of the society in which I live and that society's almost total inability to deal with this disease with anything other than a conservative agenda, think for a moment what it would be like to be facing winter winds and shit menus at the limited shelters, and the rampant T.B., and the rapes, muggings, stabbings. . . ."

Wojnarowicz comments sharply that "anyone who lives in america carries a rage and an impulse to shred the screens of physicality and the fake moral codings that fence that rage in." His rage and the expansiveness with which he expresses it are things for which he is to be not only respected but envied. □

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ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Ad Reinhardt

There is a formula in Jean-Paul Sartre's unwieldy masterpiece *Being and Nothingness* that is so precisely true of the late paintings of Ad Reinhardt that if it is *also* true of human beings, as Sartre supposed it was, then human beings and works of art must be far closer philosophical kin than is commonly realized. "We are what we are not," Sartre writes, "and we are not what we are." The main task of this paradoxical characterization was to establish the deep distinction between human beings and mere things, which, in contrast with us, "are what they are and are not what they are not." Mere things are defined by the Law of Identity, but *we* have no identity beyond our unremitting negations: We are only what we are not. The main task of the philosophy of art, made urgent in our century by the aesthetic experiments of Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol, is similarly to establish the deep difference between mere things and works of art—between, for example, mere squares of canvas painted black, on the one hand, and monochrome black paintings on the other. And Sartre's formulation may be of some use in this, inasmuch as Reinhardt's paintings, which aspire to reduce art to its very essence, exist through negating everything in art other than what is essential: "Art is not what is not art," Reinhardt wrote in one of his many manifestoes. Most art, including the art of his contemporaries, contained, in his view, a great deal that he impugned as not art. So *his* canvases survive by philosophical subtractions. They are, in his words, "Art-as-art . . . a concentration of art's essential nature." But anyone who then goes on to say that Reinhardt's paintings just are what they are—monochrome squares of black paint—is going to have a hard time accounting for the power his works have by contrast with mere squares of black painted canvas, which have no power at all. And part of that power may derive from the fact that Reinhardt's austere works hold the entire remainder of art at bay by active negation—by what Sartre calls "nihilation"—which mere painted canvas cannot do. Thus, a black painting by him is not merely black, the absence of color: It *negates* color. "Color as anti-art," he wrote in another of his exercises in the aesthetics of negation.

Reinhardt's paintings do not stand apart from the history of art by the fact of their nihilations but only by the sheer quantity of those. After all, a great many paintings are internally defined by their repudiations. The Pre-Raphaelites rejected everything they believed had been introduced into painting by Raphael, and distanced their art from everything academic. Nonobjective painting put itself into opposition with whatever paintings had objects. The Strozzi altarpiece shunned Giottesque naturalism. The Impressionists negated paintings with black shadows, the Cubists perspectival space, and Gauguin's canvases grandly swept the whole Western tradition into irrelevance. These are not what we might term external negations. There are countless things a Cubist painting is not interestingly not—it is not a cat, a thistle, a ham sandwich, a motorbike. What a Cubist painting *interestingly* is not is the kind of painting of which it is in fact a criticism. In Sartrean terms, it is the sum of its nihilations, and thus is internally related to what it Just Says No to.

Sir Ernst Gombrich once raised the profound question of why painting has a history, and then why it has the specific history it does. Gombrich's view, in *Art and Illusion*, is that the history of painting has a parallel in the history of science, construed in terms of progress. The history of art is the history of the conquest of visual appearances, of "making and matching" the world's visual arrays, at which artists got better and better. This covers a great deal, to be sure, but it cannot easily account for the history of modernism, where the matching of perceptual appearances has lost most of its energy. My own sense is that the history of modernism is driven by philosophical theories regarding the nature of art, and negation plays a central role in this history since so much of it consists in refutations. In fact, in the West at least, the history of art has been the history of philosophical nihilations, perhaps none more massive than the one that distanced early Renaissance painting from medieval art, and that started painting on the course Gombrich's narrative partially captures.

But if the history of art is essentially philosophical, and to that degree dialectical, then negation is the very substance of art, as it is our very substance—again,

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if Sartre is right. But that means that we cannot *but* experience art historically, and hence in terms of its successive rejectings. Just imagine that the history of painting had begun with works which in fact look very much the way Cubist paintings look. We certainly could not understand them as rejecting perspective, and adopting shallow depths to that end, for perspective would not as yet have been invented. (We might characterize them as "nonperspectival," for just this reason, but that would be an external rather than an internal negative fact about them, as it would be an external negative fact about Chinese painting, which existed in a culture in which pictorial perspective had not been discovered.) So this internal "notness" is what makes possible the sort of history that paintings have. Mere pieces of painted canvas are outside this history altogether, and have no internal negative relationships with works of art. Even if Reinhardt's canvases were completely monochrome, they would have as their substance the immense number of nihilations of everything Reinhardt was convinced was not essential to art. Their richness would be a function of the totality of those denials, and to experience them as art would require grasping this as an objective fact.

One final remark on negation before I address myself positively to Reinhardt's work. Not every artistic tradition is woven out of nihilations of previous art—I do not believe that the history of Chinese art can be understood in those terms at all, inasmuch as Chinese painters not untypically sought to achieve what their predecessors had sought, often by deliberately imitating them. But in those traditions that are so woven, a certain kind of art criticism is an internal dynamic of artistic change. Every change of historical direction implies a conscious critique—so criticism does not stand outside the history of art. All historically innovative artists have had to be critics, yet a good many critics who were not painters, or at least not historically innovative painters, have an internal place in the history of art. Clement Greenberg belongs to the history of art because artists who belong to that history internalized his agenda. Mark Tansey, who does not write criticism, belongs to the internal history of art in part through the fact that his paintings call into question the Greenbergian agenda. Reinhardt was a critic (though perhaps never a reviewer) and a painter whose works realize the intent of his words. In his critical writing, he rather absolutely insists that art be shapeless, imageless, lightless, objectless, colorless, wordless. The contraries of these, and many other terms, compose his critical vocabulary. His work embodies the totality of his many critical interdictions. They are what they are not, in the mode of not being it, to borrow a handy piece of phraseology.

The period and place of Reinhardt's critico-pictorial enterprise—New York from the late thirties until the mid-sixties—was an arena of critical strife so fierce, dogmatic and intolerant as to bear comparison with Byzantium in the years of the Iconoclasm strife, or Alexandria in the era in which anyone who fell off the high wire of Christological truth plunged into the dark abyss of heresy. The bickering was over the essential nature of art, understood almost without question as the essential nature of painting, with which art was spontaneously identified. The recent Whitney Biennial was revealing of many things, not least of which was the uncertainty of this identification in contemporary artistic consciousness. (Almost none of the younger artists represented were painters.) In June 1946, Reinhardt published a cartoon in the newspaper *P.M.* titled "How to Look at Modern Art in America." The work is as revealing for what it does not show—perhaps a subconscious nihilation—as for what it does. The tree of art has about two hundred leaves, each with the name of a contemporary American artist written on it. These were all painters, as far as I can tell. Sculpture figures in the schematism only as part of the soil in which the tree is rooted—but my sense is that Reinhardt included "Negro Sculpture" primarily because of the influence it had on painters like Picasso. Fifteen years later, he drew a modified version of this for *ARTnews*, and while one branch had by then fallen off and the leaves had considerably thinned, "modern art" remained "modern painting" without question. "Sculpture," Barnett Newman said in the fifties, "is what you bump into when you back up to see a painting." It is difficult to see, in retrospect, how the arguments about artistic purity could have been sustained had anyone asked what pure sculpture would be like, or what flatness, of which Greenberg and his followers made so much, could have had to do with sculpture. Perhaps the implicit view was that sculpture's history was merely epiphenomenal, reflecting the history of painting. The disputes really

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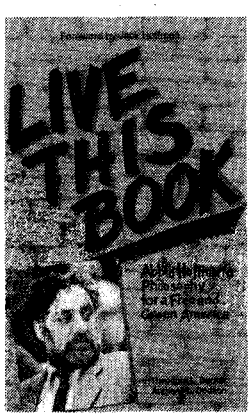

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came to an end when all the things that had been discarded in the name of purity re-entered painting in the mid-sixties, by which time in any case painting had lost much of its priority as the historically effective medium.

Reinhardt, as personality, as writer and as painter, emblemized that period of artistic strife, which he did not survive. He died in 1967, just after the triumph of a major retrospective of his work at the Jewish Museum, at that time the New York institution most committed to the display of advanced art. His art, however, survived its historical moment, in part because it seemed to belong to certain movements, like Minimalism, with whose program Reinhardt did not live long enough to disagree, as one is certain he would have done, inasmuch as the affinities are external and finally deceptive. But it survived for less accidental reasons as well, having little to do with the subsequent history of artistic movements. In the final analysis, his paintings at their greatest negate their own negations and seem to rise above their historical station, into a realm of what one feels to be timeless, spare beauty. The final paradox of Reinhardt's works is that they negate the context of historical negations that explains their very being, and seem to turn into trans-historical presences of great spiritual power. They seem to belong less to their immediate historical moment than any paintings I know. If less is more, then least is most and nothingness is everything.

The elegant retrospective of Reinhardt's work at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (until September 2, after which the work will be on view at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art from October 13 until January 5, 1992) traces an itinerary of what feels like mystical ascent. It is impeccably installed, though any installation of this work faces internal obstacles I shall discuss below. One passes blowups of some of Reinhardt's art-world cartoons on either side in approaching the painting galleries. These are like curricula for courses in the moral history of modern art: Reinhardt set himself up as a kind of conscience for artistic conduct as well as for the conduct of artists, and as a cartoonist by profession saw in the form a perfect homiletic vehicle. Thus, the lower branch of the Tree of Modern Art in 1946 is in danger of breaking off because of weights that include subject matters of various genres (the nude, still life, landscape) as well as anti-essentialist influences (like Mexican painting and regionalism generally) and, finally, commercial forces. That branch, precarious in 1946, appears no less so in the 1961 rendering, though the main and seemingly healthy branch has inexplicably fallen away as the threatened one has acquired a new set of pressures. These high-spirited comic drawings are full of a sparring intelligence and an acerbic wit, and are dense with stylistic references to the history of art. For archeologists of the art world of those years, they are indispensable guides to the ruins and invaluable as well for identifying Reinhardt's own nihilations. More than that, they are alive with a kind of graphic energy altogether lacking in the jaunty, syncopated abstraction to be glimpsed through the entryway into the painting galleries. One feels that he more surely belongs to the history of art through these cartoons than through the roomful of abstractions that follows, though I daresay there would have been no way of treating the cartoons as art in those years. And indeed, it is not until Reinhardt achieves in the paintings themselves some of the same negativity these cartoons exhibit in their roughneck way that the former take on a proportional vitality. This happens when he more or less drops everything from that first abstraction, *Number 30* of 1938, replacing its eccentric bars and off-squares with heavy and symmetrical forms, and sacrifices the harlequinade of colors for brooding monotones. Except for being abstract, to which he remained ideologically committed through his entire career, *Number 30*, done a few years after he graduated from Columbia College, is a demonstration piece of what he came to believe was not a part of art. The early abstractions have an astonishing diversity, as if so many short pathways cut and then abandoned. They testify to the probing of an artist who recognized that he was on the wrong path without as yet knowing which was the true one.

In making the transit from the cartoons to the great final gallery in which twenty of Reinhardt's last "black paintings" are hung, one passes through two suites of monochrome works that are extremely beautiful: a suite of blue paintings and a suite of red ones. These present the inherent obstacles to installing a retrospective of Reinhardt's work, which the present exhibition does not solve, and which perhaps none can. Let us consider the way the paintings are arrayed on the west walls of the two galler-

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ies in which the red and the blue paintings are respectively assembled. On each of these walls, the installer has made very fetching arrangements. A large vertical red painting is flanked by a pair of similarly colored paintings on each side of it; and two matching blue paintings, large and vertical, are paired with a smaller blue painting on either side. These arrangements give the impression that the paintings belong together, as components in an assemblage, rather than having each a singular identity, meant to be seen independently of one another. I mean that the one groupment of five paintings and the other groupment of four paintings, made up of works nearly if not exactly identical in color but not in size, generate a sort of syntax when hung as they have been, as if they form a sort of pictorial proposition or perhaps a melody. It is irresistible to see them this way, just as one cannot hear "tra-la-la" as three independent sounds upon hearing them close enough together. And this inadvertent syntactic ligature I felt to be utterly at odds with the puritanical motivations of the work.

Perhaps it was to abort this propensity that Reinhardt resolved, toward the end of his career, to paint everything the same size and shape—five-foot squares, more or less. Even so, it is difficult to avoid the illusion of syntax, for on the final wall, just before the exit, are three almost unindividuated black squares, and the viewer has to decide whether it is a single work of three matching panels or three works that resemble one another importantly but are intended to be seen and experienced as distinct. No doubt the fact of their sameness is to be an element in one's experience of any of them, but so is the fact of their numerical difference. It is, however, extremely difficult to stifle what one might term the artifacts of syntax in a show like this, where all the works of the mature period resemble one another so closely. There may in consequence be an inconsistency between the spirit of the works and the exigencies of a retrospective committed to show many of them. Reinhardt said at one point that his paintings hang uncomfortably with the paintings of others, but one might add that they hang uncomfortably with one another. Perhaps the ideal way to see Reinhardt's works is one at a time, in a room given over entirely to it, which the work then might transform into a kind of meditative chapel. The interesting truth is that however much the history and theory of painting went into their formation, it is not painting to which the mind goes in contemplating them but something a good bit more mysterious and powerful.

The black paintings, though monochrome—or monotonal—are in fact not homogeneous, and when one peers at them intently and protractedly, certain forms disclose themselves, as if at the bottom of a very dark pool. The last of the square paintings in fact are composed around a sort of blocky black H form, where the outer edges of the H form the sides of the square. The H feels like a kind of bridge, and if this is too literal a reading of an abstract painting, it is not inappropriate as a metaphor. In any case, there will be two inner squares, above and below the horizontal part of the H, and these are of a tone as close in value to it as they can be without becoming *as* black. These just-noticeably different squares advance and retreat, as if the paintings held a kind of movement. I don't know what to think of these contained shapes. Are they the eye's reward for sustained looking? Or do they diminish what would be the absolute power of completely black squares, had Reinhardt been able to bring himself to those as the terminus of his itinerary along the *via negativa*? You'll have to make up your own mind on that, I'm afraid.

As we began with an existential philosopher, we might close with one: This movement of black within black comes closer than anything I can think of to being the visual equivalent of that extraordinary activity Heidegger describes in "What Is Metaphysics?" as "nothingness nothinging." This may sound better in German as that which one experiences when *Das Nicht nichtet*—but maybe it ought to be difficult to state, as the experience is meant among other things to reveal the limits of what can be said, as Reinhardt's paintings at least approach the limits of what can be shown. □

THE GREENING OF THE FIRE ESCAPE

Morning sun sharpened its angled shadow
on the carpet—ascending and descending
steps we hoped we'd never need to take.

As if we could forget what it meant,
its mission, could say "balcony" and
balcony it became, we converted it

to civilian use. Herbs flourished there.
An urban gardener crouched in her milieu,
trow and watering can passed through the window,

the compact terrain of the planting box
arrayed in prison stripes cast by its railing.
Out there an alternate view was garnered:

sky breathed between rooftops, cats balanced
on fences that marked small yards,
trees collected birds as though magnetic.

Black zigzagged the brick back walls
of buildings, half ladder, half stairs.
It was no stairway to heaven, no Jacob's ladder—

there were limits to how far it could take us—
though there was something angelic about it,
the loyal waiting by the window to save.

Daily that hypertensive summer, you leaned out
with water to prevent the fragrant leaves
from parching in the desirable southern exposure.

Dill, parsley, basil—all that grew there
we consumed, and more kept coming, a camouflage
we counted on the iron wings to hold.

Jeanne Beaumont

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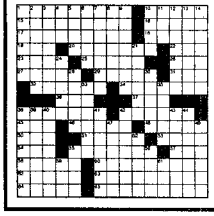

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L		R		H		Y		E		C		N		E
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O		E		P		P		E		E		I		A
W	A	R		S	E	A	R	C	H		R	A	N	T
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M	A	S	S		D	E	B	R	I	S		M	A	Y
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T	E	N	U	R	E	S		E	P	I	G	R	A	M
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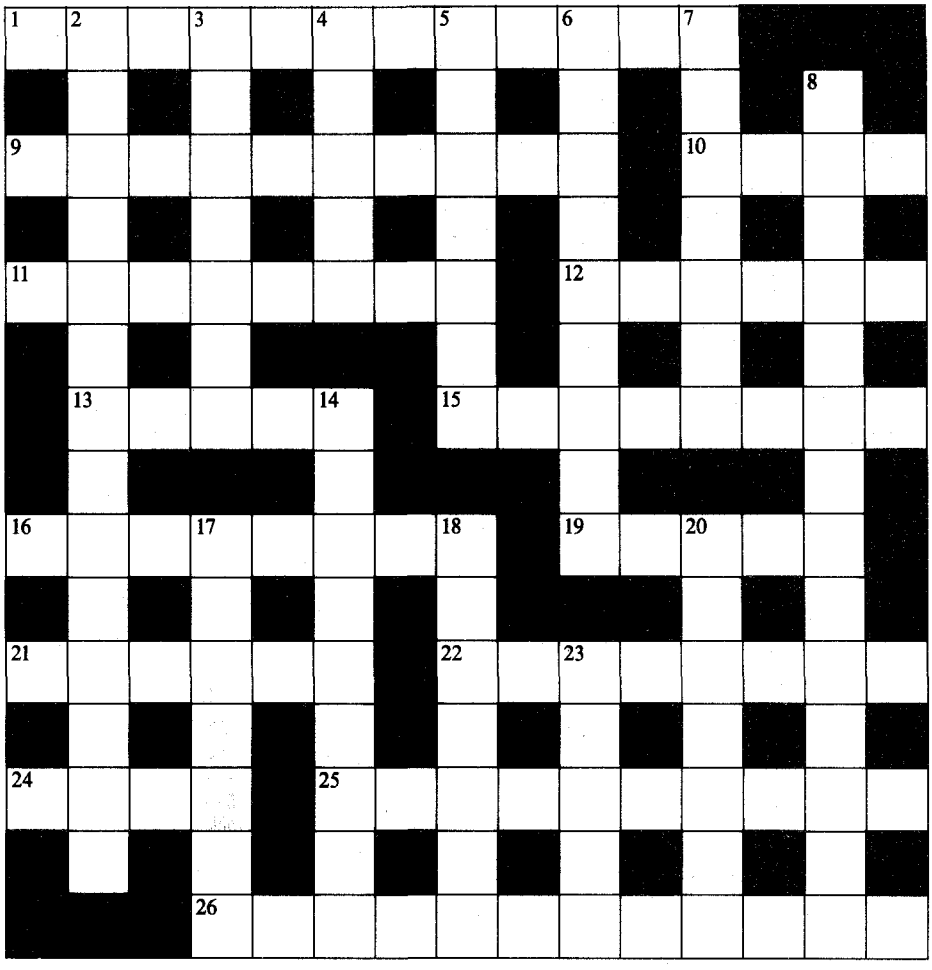
Crossword Puzzle No. 2347

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 A purchase request for a lot of cotton probably has a pretty good lead-off. (7,5)
9 It makes the scribe omit an application of mathematics and statistics to life. (10)
10 Head for what might go with crackers . . . (4)
11 . . . and head for cover in Russia? The other way 12 . . . (8)
12 . . . which is all about "Row, Row, Row Your Boat!" (6)
13 and 15 The best in the ring near something right from the horse's mouth! (The patient might not.) (5,2,3,3)
16 The auto returns with a hundred soon to be changed for the ring-tailed types. (8)
19 With such an operation, the watchword might be "Gotcha!" (5)
21 Draw "S" on a boat? (6)
22 What those dining gentlemen used to do after eating something the well-traveled may want? (8)
24 Such a bow might seem coy. (4)
25 One in France gets funny about no answer not paying off! (10)
26 What the polite photographer might say to look like a child's importunity. (6,6)

DOWN

2 They don't necessarily break horses and with children and wild ones it might be a case of "the biter bit." (6,8)
3 Not exactly a true map of Japanese production for the consumer. (7)
4 After dinner, the man of 22 might want to let out another one. (5)
5 Look in a Washington map or a world atlas to find it. (7)
6 A philosopher of the French Mercedes, for example, gets set up! (9)
7 Show that 2 + 2 = 4 all over again and say "Shame!" (7)
8 Don't they ever have private sittings with what force is currently available in many countries. (8,6)
14 Certainly not a good place to live where they used to be over the hill, as they said. (4-5)
17 What some play behind? (You might try it on the dog, without dash.) (5-2)
18 A fool, commonly, has one with a broken net. Is this wise? (7)
20 A little devil over-turned—which is better. (7)
23 The ship has accumulations of water rising. (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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THE BOMBING DIDN'T KILL THIS IRAQI CHILD. THE EMBARGO MIGHT.

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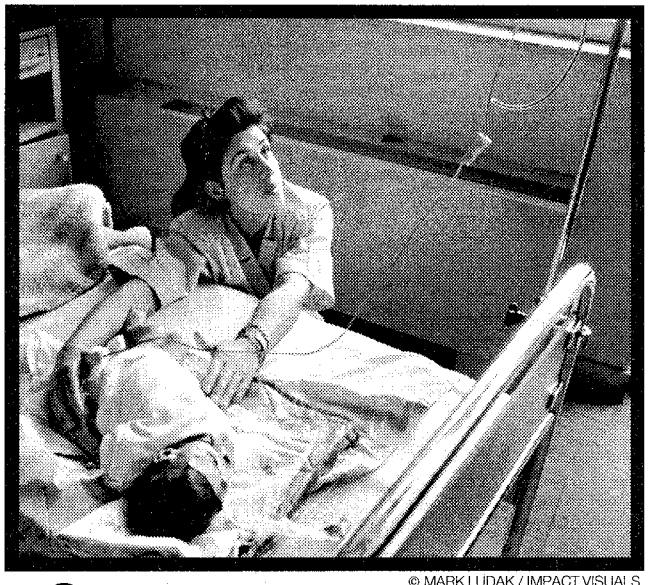
Children drink water from bomb craters. They play in knee-deep sewage. They go to bed hungry, night after night.

Epidemics stalk these children. Cholera. Typhoid. Hepatitis. Weakened by malnutrition, children die in a matter of days.



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Sanctions were once seen as an alternative to war. They have become its final—and most deadly—weapon.

According to a Harvard study **55,000 children have already died** from these "delayed effects" of the war **— and at least 170,000 more will die within the next year.**

They will die from malnutrition in a country that used to import 70% of its food — and can now import none. UNICEF officials report seeing — for the first time in the Middle East — the pot bellies and bony faces that mark the kind of starvation found in drought stricken Africa.

Famine, according to the Harvard study, is "a real possibility" — unless food shortages are relieved.

They will die from epidemics because Iraq cannot import anything — from medicines to the machinery necessary to repair its electrical system.

"Without electricity," the Harvard study concludes, "water cannot be purified, sewage cannot be treated, water-borne diseases flourish, and hospitals cannot cure treatable illness."

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